

DELINEATION
OF
FENTHILL & ITS ABBEY
BY
JOHN RITTER.



Page

MDCCLXXIII.

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4to. 1823

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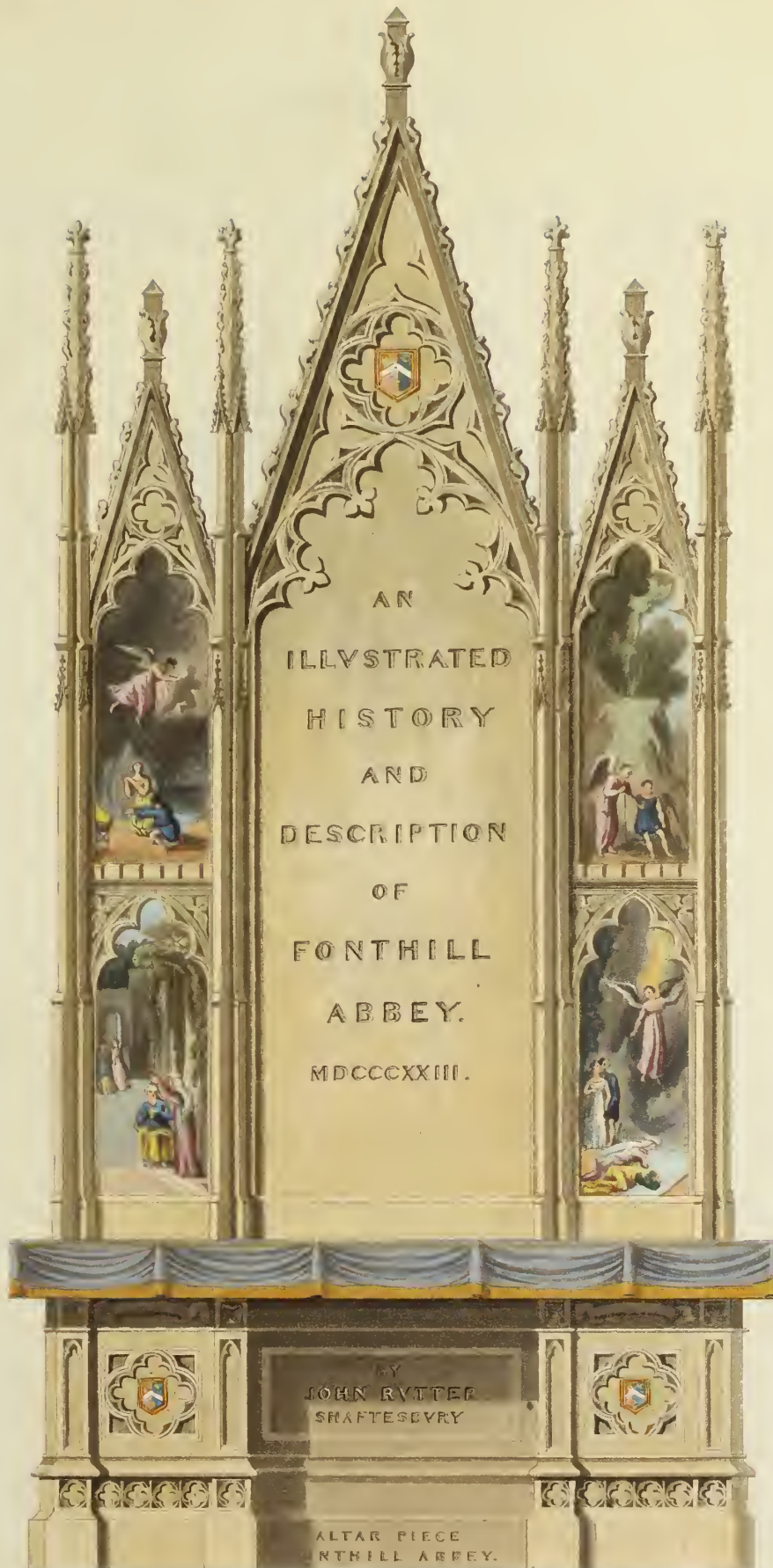
DELINEATIONS
OF
F O N T H I L L
AND ITS
ABBAY.



FONTHILL ABBEY.



INTERIOR OF ST. MICHAEL'S GALLERY,

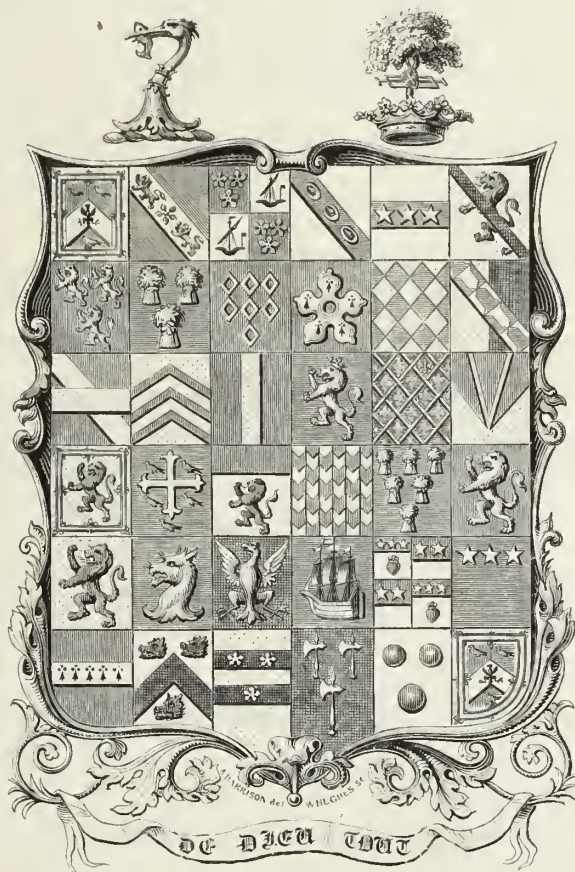


C. F. Porden del.

Havell & Son sculp.

Published March 1st 1823, by J. Rutter Shaftesbury

DELINEATIONS
OF
FONTHILL AND ITS ABBEY.



BY JOHN RUTTER,

SHAFTESBURY.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR, SHAFTESBURY.

LONDON:

BY CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO. PALL MALL EAST; LONGMAN, HURST, AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW;
HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO. CHEAPSIDE; JOHN AND ARTHUR ARCH, CORNHILL, &c. &c.

MDCCCXXIII.

TO THE MOST NOBLE

SUSANNAH EUPHEMIA,

DUCHESS OF HAMILTON AND BRANDON,

MARCHIONESS OF DOUGLAS AND CLYDESDALE, Etc. Etc.

THE LUSTRE OF WHOSE DESCENT AND SUPERIOR PERSONAL ACQUIREMENTS,

IS ONLY EQUALLED BY THE

CREATIVE IMAGINATION AND DIGNIFIED TASTE

OF HIM, THROUGH WHOM SHE HAS DERIVED THE SPLENDID ENDOWMENTS

OF BIRTH AND FORTUNE;

THE FOLLOWING ATTEMPT TO PRESENT A FAITHFUL DELINEATION

OF

Fonthill Abbey, in the County of Wilts,

WITH

ITS DOMAIN AND UNRIVALLED SCENERY,

IS, WITH PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

FROM the earliest hour that the interesting mansion which is the subject of the following pages, became accessible to the world, the author felt a dawning ambition to prepare a description of it for the public eye. He made his first attempt, amidst the hurry of the view, in 1822. Defective as it necessarily was, it succeeded beyond the author's hopes ; and as it was impossible not to feel that those who had visited the place would desire a more perfect record, and that those who had not, would gladly receive a more satisfactory delineation, he pledged himself at the time to put forth all his strength to execute it ; and, whatever the effort might cost, not to stop short of its accomplishment. To redeem this pledge, he now presents himself before the public.

The satisfactory performance of his task (even to himself) he has found to be much more difficult than he had anticipated ; not from any impediment thrown in his way by the late proprietor, or by the present possessor, for their kindness and liberality have been unlimited and uniform ; not from a want of patronage, for he has to make his acknowledgements to a much larger body of nobility and gentry and friends than his most sanguine hopes had dared to calculate upon ; but from the colossal mag-

nitude of the principal object, the endless number of its details, and the inexhaustible stores of its precious contents.

From these causes, and stimulated by a desire to do his subject all the justice in his power, his task, for many months, appeared to increase rather than diminish. A more intimate acquaintance with the responsibility he had undertaken, served but to convince him of the difficulties of discharging it; and the goal which he was endeavouring to reach, receded in proportion to his exertions to attain it. Still, excited by more than ordinary stimulus, he did not relax a moment; and after having availed himself of the assistance of the able artists who have prepared his embellishments,—of the facilities of his neighbourhood to the Abbey, whose doors were always open to him,—of all the materials which the most unwearied industry could accumulate,—of the suggestions and assistance of several ingenious friends,—and of a never-ceasing aim at fidelity and truth; he offers, with great diffidence, his volume to the candid examination of his subscribers and the public at large.

The general arrangement, which he has adopted, he is aware is a little different from that which is usual in works of this nature; but as the interest of Fonthill Abbey is not derived from any historical recollections, nor is increased by its relation or connection with any object in its immediate neighbourhood, the scanty materials furnished by preceding centuries for an account of its Manor, Fonthill Gifford, appeared of too uninteresting a nature to take their usual position in the van. He has, therefore, placed them in the APPENDIX, and proceeded immediately to the principal part of his subject, giving it the most distinguished position, and afterwards treating of the subordinate features and the details.

In doing this, he feels he is following the natural order of things. What visitor could, with patience, search for the springs which give

the place its designation, or commence with the long rides or shorter walks, even in this demesne, when he knew that the noble doors of the Western Hall were unfolded,—that he could rush into the Grand Octagon, and tread the long perspective of the Galleries?

The Author has therefore anticipated that the ardent amateur will hasten on with him to the door of the Abbey; and it is there, he proposes, in the first place, to offer his services;—to attend the visitor step by step through the extensive series of apartments, in one continued route, or linger among the furniture, the architecture, the paintings, or the heraldry, as the curiosity or taste of the visitor may decide.*

The exterior of the Abbey, the dressed grounds, and the distant scenery, will follow in succession.

Among the papers in the Appendix, he flatters himself that the notices of the former mansions, and a short memoir on the origin and progress of the present Abbey, will convey some novel and satisfactory information.

One of the most pleasing parts of his duty is left for the Author to discharge, and he regrets that it is not as easy as it is pleasing,—the adequate expression of his acknowledgements and gratitude to those who have so eminently assisted him in his labours.

Earliest in the list he must place Mr. Beckford. To him he owes the first permission to visit the Abbey, at a time when the rarity of such permissions made it more than an ordinary favour. His kindness was continued through the agency of the Chevalier Franchi and the late venerable

* To facilitate this purpose, and to preserve perspicuity and order amidst the multifarious objects demanding attention, the letter-press is so arranged that the general description may be read as an uninterrupted narrative; the details of Furniture, Architecture, Paintings, and Heraldry, are inserted in another type, under their respective initials, in the rooms which contain them.

Abbé M'Quin, up to the last hour of possession. The polite urbanity of the former, and the obliging attentions of the two latter gentlemen, will live long in his remembrance.

At the commencement of the present undertaking, the science of heraldry was to the Author "a sealed book," and but for the prompt and unreserved communications of G. F. Beltz, Esq. Lancaster Herald, it might have so continued. But to that gentleman's general professional knowledge, was added the most accurate information as to the blazonry of the Abbey, and from these stores the Author gratefully acknowledges he was never sent away empty-handed.

To Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Bart. he is obliged for some valuable information relative to the descent of the Manor of Fonthill Gifford, as well as for other memoranda of interest and importance.

After the Abbey had changed possessors, the same advantage of free access, and warm interest in the success of his projected work, that he had experienced before the purchase by Mr. Farquhar, was uninterruptedly continued to him. For the facilities so afforded by Mr. Farquhar, enhanced as they were by the personal civilities and friendly exertions of Mr. Phillips, the Author feels himself greatly indebted.

To Stedman Whitwell, Esq. architect, of Grosvenor Place, he has to acknowledge the obligation of very important professional assistance, which has enabled the Author to give his work a character, that must render it of the greatest utility to men of science and amateurs, as a book of reference, in which all the architectural details of that remarkable building are now, for the first time, accurately analysed and described.

The zeal and ability with which the artists he has employed, have discharged their respective duties, deserve his warmest praise; their exertions for his success were not confined to the mere letter of their engage-

ments, but were disinterestedly employed wherever it was considered they could be serviceable.

The excellence of their individual productions he leaves, with confidence, to the discrimination of his subscribers and the public, and he now awaits, with an anxiety it would be hypocrisy to conceal, the expression of public opinion, and the decision of his patrons upon the volume he has at length completed, and now lays before them.

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DESCRIPTION

OF THE

EMBELLISHMENTS.

PLATE I.—END OF CHAPTER VI.

A Map of the Grounds which are enclosed by the Barrier, and of the more interesting parts that immediately adjoin them—"The Approach," by the Salisbury and London Road towards the Abbey, commences at Fonthill Bishop; and traversing the old Park, passes the Church and Inn at Fonthill Gifford, and entering the new Plantations, proceeds to the Barrier Gate, from whence a winding road of very considerable ascent leads to the Abbey. The "Walk within the Barrier" commences a little eastward of the building, and then sweeps northward to the western extremity of the boundary, from whence it takes a serpentine direction to Stone Gate Barrier; it then proceeds along the Great Western Avenue and Beacon Terrace to the Beacon Hill, and returns towards the Abbey through Bittern Vale to the American Grounds. The "Walk without the Barrier" commences at the Inn, and skirting the old Park for a short distance, crosses it down to the northern extremity of the Lake, and thence returns through the Alpine Gardens towards the Inn. "The Ride" runs from the Abbey to the Barrier Gate, and then turning westward, continues by a circuitous route, and through Stone Gate Barrier, to Knoyle Corner; from thence it extends along the Great Terrace, beyond the limits of the Map, to the north and east, and returning, winds round the head of the Lake to the road near the Inn.

II.—PAGE 7.

PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL STORY.—This gives at once a correct idea of the arrangement of the principal floor of the edifice. In the centre is the Great Octagon, and from it, in the direction of the cardinal points, run the four grand divisions. The State Entrance is in the western limb, and in the side opposite to it is the Eastern Transept, containing the rooms which were last fitted up. In the northern branch are the Oratory, King Edward's Gallery, &c. and in the south-

ern one is St. Michael's Gallery, leading to the With-Drawing Rooms, &c. The references upon the plate, give the names and situations of the several rooms, turrets, &c.

III.—PAGE 9.

LONGITUDINAL SECTION,—Through the centre of the Tower, Galleries, &c. looking east. In this plate, the Abbey is supposed to be divided in the direction of a line, running north and south, and the part nearest the spectator removed. By this means, the position of the stories and rooms over each other, is exhibited in a much more clear and satisfactory manner, than can be done by plans only.

The lowermost range in the section, is that of the offices of the Basement. At the western termination of it, are the Eastern Entrance and the Southern Hall.

Over this is the Principal Floor, and beginning on the left hand, we trace successively the Oratory, the Sanctuary, the Vaulted Corridor, King Edward's Gallery and Vestibule, the Grand Saloon or Octagon, the Vestibule of St. Michael's Gallery—and St. Michael's Gallery itself, finishing in the South Oriel.

Immediately above the South Oriel, is the Gallery Cabinet, and (returning northwards) the Eastern Corridor, the Anti-Chamber, the Vaulted Library, the Chintz Boudoir: and continuing across the Octagon, we find a corresponding room to the last, called the Tribune Room; to this succeed the Lancaster Gallery, the Lancaster Anti-Room and the Lancaster State Bed-Chamber. Over this is the upper Lancaster Room.

In the Mervyn Tower, above the Tribune Room, are the Duke's Chamber and another. There are also two chambers in each of the towers south of the principal one.

Through the middle arch of the Octagon, is the Portal under the Music Gallery, and above it the organ screen. In the arches of the sides, are two of the celebrated painted windows. Over these principal arches is the Arcade of the Nunneries, the northern and southern ones of which, and the chambers over them, are exposed in the section. Above the Arcade is the series of circular groins, carrying the Lantern, which is immediately over.

The stories above the Lantern are the unfinished apartments and frame work of the tower. At the summit is the Star-chamber and Tower Gallery. Over them, the mode of collecting the flues which are carried up the tower, into one common centre shaft, may be observed.

IV.—PAGE 24.

INTERIOR OF THE GREAT WESTERN HALL, leading to the Grand Saloon or Octagon.—

The spectator is supposed just to have passed the State Entrance from the Western Lawn. The windows on the right are filled with stained glass of a subdued tone of colour. The niches opposite have crimson draperies. In the first from the left in the plate, is the statue of the late Alderman Beckford. The door under the farther window opens to the Cloisters, and the one at the far end beyond to the sub-octagon. The other leads to the Great Tower Staircase. Through the upper part of the Vestibule, may be seen the Nunnery Arcade, and in the depth of the farther Vestibule, the Portal opening to the Crimson Dining Room, the Music Gallery, and Organ screen.

It is from this point of view, that the extraordinary effect of the stained glass of the Octagon is most powerfully felt ; but this it was of course impossible to give the least idea of in the plate.

V.—PAGE 30.

THE GRAND DRAWING ROOM.—The door on the right hand leads to the Octagon Cabinet.

VI.—PAGE 40.

KING EDWARD'S GALLERY, looking across the Octagon into St. Michael's Gallery.—

This latter Gallery commences at the gothic doors ; over them is the Tribune (now closed) of the Chintz Boudoir. In the extreme distance is the South Oriel.

VII.—Facing the FRONTISPIECE.

INTERIOR OF ST. MICHAEL'S GALLERY, looking across the Octagon into King Edward's Gallery.—In the Vestibule of the latter Gallery, is the balcony of the Tribune Room, and beyond the Gallery, is the suite terminating in the Oratory.

VIII.—FRONTISPIECE.

ALTAR PIECE.—This is of oak, and originally belonged to the Oratory. In the middle compartment stood an alabaster statue of St. Antony of Padua, by Rossi. The paintings are by Stothard, and their subjects taken from the Book of Tobit ; they are,

The capture of the fish by Tobias, at the command of Raphaël the angel.

The banishment of Asmodeus, by the burning of the liver in the Marriage Chamber.

The return of Tobias and Raphaël.

The supernatural disappearance of Raphael.

The shields are charged with the armorial bearings of Mr. Beckford.

IX.—PAGE 20.

SECTION OF THE GRAND SALOON, VESTIBULES, NUNNERIES, &c., looking east.—

This is the middle and most interesting part of plate 2, drawn to a larger scale for the purpose of more completely exhibiting that extraordinary apartment the Saloon or Octagon, and the connection of the principal rooms with it. An idea of its vast height (128 ft.) may be formed by comparing it with the figures that are traversing the floor.

On the north, in succession over each other, are King Edward's Gallery, the Tribune Room, the Duke's Room, and an upper chamber. Higher over the Vestibule are the Northern Nunnery, and a bed room over.

On the south side, in the same order, are St. Michael's Gallery, the Chintz Boudoir, and the two chambers of the Latimer Tower.

The elegant taste of the detail of the Music Gallery, the Organ Screen, the Nunnery Arcade, and the Lantern, may be appreciated by the increased dimensions of this plate.

X.—PAGE 60.

SPECIMENS OF THE CEILINGS.—These are a few selected from the immense number; for there is not a ceiling of a finished room that has not its peculiar design: Their forms are always architectural, and the heraldry, which is their principal decoration, is in alto-relievo, and not emblazoned.

XI.—PAGE 66.

VIEW OF THE WEST AND NORTH FRONTS, from the end of the Clerk's Walk.—The general arrangement of the plan of the Abbey may be distinctly traced from this view. The Centre Tower stands immediately over the Octagon, from which diverge the four great arms or radii.

XII.—PAGE 70.

VIEW OF THE SOUTH FRONT, from the Lawn.—In this view, the southern group of towers, &c. in which is the dwelling part of the Abbey, occupies the fore-ground.

Over it rises the central tower; and diverging from it, are the western and eastern limbs. The northern is of course concealed by the magnitude of the buildings, between it and the spectator.

XIII.—PAGE 90.

VIEW OF THE WEST AND SOUTH FRONTS, from the Beacon Terrace.—In this view, the general effect of the Abbey, as a grand architectural composition, its position, and its connection with the surrounding scenery, are displayed. Hinckley Hill is the planted eminence on the right. The valley in the middle ground slopes down to Bitham Lake, and the American Gardens.

Wood Cut Vignettes.

XIV.—TITLE PAGE.

AN ACHIEVEMENT, charged with thirty-six of the principal quarterings, selected from the genealogy of Mr. Beckford. The following are the names of the persons or families to whom they appertained, and the heraldic description of each coat. The names which are printed in small capitals, shew the actual marriages, by which the remainder of the armorial ensigns were introduced.

1. BECKFORD, Parted per Pale Gules, and Azure, on a Chevron, Argent, between three Martlets, Or, an Eagle displayed, Sable; all within a Bordure of the fourth, charged with the royal double tressure of Scotland,* flory and counter-flory of the first.
2. HERING†, Vert, on a Bend, Argent, a Cinque-foil between two Lions passant guardant, Gules.
3. HAMILTON, Quarterly; first and fourth Gules, three cinque-foils, Ermine, pierced of the field, two and one: second and third, Argent, a Lymphad with her sails furled up, Sable, for the title of Earl of Arran, borne by the Family of Hamilton.

* The grant of the double tressure, under the authority of the Earl Marshal of England, registered in the Heralds' College, bears date 20th March, 1810; and after reciting the grant of a previous patent, dated August 11, 1791, whereby his arms had been placed within a *bordure, Or, charged with a tressure flory, Gules*, as a memorial of his lineal descent from the blood royal of Scotland, and Mr. Beckford's extraordinary accumulation of descents from royal and illustrious families, states that "in consideration of the same, and in order to preserve the memory thereof, an augmentation to the bordure, so first assigned, of a *double*, in lieu of a *single* tressure, was thereupon granted, to be borne by him and his descendants for ever according to the laws of arms."—*Gentleman's Magazine*.

† "This quartering devolves to Mr. Beckford, as representative of his grandmother (*ex parte paternâ*) Bathshua, daughter of Julines Hering, of Jamaica, Esq. and sister and coheir of her brother Nathaniel Hering."

Gentleman's Magazine.

4. Leslie, Argent, on a Bend, Azure, three Buckles, Or.
5. Muir, Argent, on a Fesso, Azure, three Mulletts of the field.
6. Abernethy, Or, a Lion Rampant, Gules, debruised by a Bendlet, Sable.
7. Hugh, Earl of Ross, Gules, three Lions Rampant, Argent.
8. Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, Azure, three Garbes, Or.
9. Saher de Quincy, Earl of Winchester, Gules, Seven Mascles conjoined, three, three, and one, Or.
10. Roger de Bellomonte, Gules, a cinque-foil Ermine, pierced of the field.
11. Mellent, Lozengy, Or and Azure.
12. Ralph de Gwadyr, Earl of the East Angles, Parted per Pale Or and Sable, a Bend, Vair.
13. William Fitz Osbert, Earl of Hereford, Gules, a Bend Argent, over all a Fess, Or.
14. Yvery, Or, three Chevronels, Gules.
15. Grantmesnil, Gules, a Pale, Or.
16. Rowland, Lord of Galloway, Azure, a Lion Rampant, Argent, ducally crowned, Or.
17. Morville, Azure, Semée of Fleurs de Lys, and fretty, Or.
18. David le Scott, Earl of Huntingdon, Or, three Piles, in the centre base point, meeting Gules.
19. Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotland, Or, a Lion Rampant, Gules, armed and langued, Azure, within a double Tressure flory and counter-flory, of the second.
20. Saxon Kings, Azure, a Cross flory between five Martlets, Or ; the fifth in the centre base point.
21. Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, Argent, a Lion Rampant, Azure, a Chief, Gules.
22. Aldred, Paly Barry-indented of Six, Argent and Gules, counter-charged.
23. Hugh de Kevelioc, Earl of Chester, Azure, Six Garbes, three, two, and one, Or.
24. Ralph de Gernons, Earl of Chester, Gules, a Lion Rampant, Argent.
25. Ralph de Meschines, Earl of Chester, Or, a Lion Rampant, Gules.
26. Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, Azure, a Wolf's head erased at the neck, Argent.
27. Algar, Sable, an Eagle displayed, Or.
28. Caithness, Azure, a Galley under sail, Or ; the sails and pennons, Argent.
29. Sir James Douglas of *Dalkeith*, Quarterly ; first and fourth, Argent, on a Chief Gules, two Mulletts of the field : second and third, Argent, a human heart, Gules ensigned with an Imperial Crown, Or ; on a Chief Azure, three Mulletts of the first, for *Douglas Augmentation*.
30. Douglas, *Ancient*, Azure, three Mulletts in chief, Argent.
31. Craufurd, Gules, a Fess, Ermine.
32. READING,* Argent, a Chevron between three Boars' Heads erased, Sable.
33. COWARD,† Or, two Bars, Sable ; the upper one charged with two, the lower one with one cinque-foil, Argent.

* This quartering is peculiar to the Hamiltons of Abercorn ; but the former quarterings, No. 4 to 31 inclusive, are introduced by Hamilton of Arran ; and may be borne by the heirs of the different branches descending from the Duke of Chatelherault. Mr. Beckford's maternal great-grandfather, James, 6th Earl of Abercorn, married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir Robert Reading, Bart. by Jane, Countess Dowager of Monrath.

† Brought in by the maternal grandmother of Mr. Beckford ; namely, Bridget Coward, daughter and heir of William Coward, of Wells, Esq. being the arms borne by John Coward, of West Pennard, in the county of Somerset, Esq.

- 34. Hall, Sable, three Battle-axes, erect, two and one, Argent.
- 35. Besill, Argent, three Torteaux, two and one.
- 36. BECKFORD as the First.

- 1. CREST OF BECKFORD before the augmentation, viz. on a Wreath of the Colours, a Heron's head erased, Or, gorged with a collar, flory and counter-flory, Gules; in the beak a fish, Argent.
- 2. CREST OF BECKFORD after the augmentation, viz. Issuant out of a ducal coronet, Or, an oak-tree fructed, proper, the stem penetrated transversely by a frame-saw, also proper, inscribed with the word "Through," differenced by a shield pendant from a branch of the tree, charged with the arms of Latimer, being, Gules, a cross-flory, Or.

This additional crest was assigned to Mr. Beckford, under the Earl Marshal's authority, to commemorate his descent from a coheir of the Abercorn branch of the house of Hamilton; and in allusion also to his descent from William the 1st. Lord Latimer.

THE MOTTO, **De Dieu Tout**, was that anciently used by the Mervyn Family, who were in the possession of Fonthill early in the sixteenth century; and was adopted by Mr. Beckford, instead of "LIBERTAS ET NATALE SOLUM," the motto used by his father, the late Alderman Beckford.

XV.—PAGE 1.

VIEW OF THE LODGE, at the entrance of the Old Park, Fonthill Bishop.—It is through this arch, that the road from London and Salisbury and from Shaftesbury to the Abbey, passes immediately on leaving the turnpike. From the current opinion, that it was designed by Inigo Jones, it is usually called "Jones's Lodge." It is certainly the oldest specimen of architecture upon the domain, and its simplicity and proportions are very much in the manner of that distinguished architect.

XVI.—PAGE 6.

THE EASTERN POSTERN TOWER, in the south-east quadrangle.—This is a part of the Abbey itself, and the Postern at its base is the ordinary door of entrance. The east Oriel and one of the painted windows of St. Michael's Gallery are seen in the story above.

XVII.—PAGE 7.

GROUP of a few of the more interesting ARTICLES of VIRTU within the mansion.—In the centre is a richly mounted Nautilus, on an ivory plinth, carved by Benvenuto

Cellini. Next on the right, is an oriental china bottle, superbly mounted, said to be the earliest known specimen of porcelain introduced into Europe. Behind this is an enamelled Greek shrine, brought by St. Louis from Palestine. The article at the extremity, is a gold Tazza, by Moiette and Auguste, 1793. To the left of the Nautilus, is a vase of Hungarian Topaz, the largest of one block ever known, magnificently decorated with enamels and precious stones; the execution of Benvenuto Cellini, and intended as a marriage present to Catharine Cornaro. Beyond this, is a chased silver gilt casket, the panels of which are exquisite specimens of moss agates, jaspers, &c. It is from the Vatican. Upon this stand three chalices of onyx, striated agate, and calcedony, of beautiful workmanship, and at the end of it, is a massive silver candlestick. Beyond the Nautilus, is an ivory vase finely executed; and adjoining it one of the or-moulu candlesticks, designed by Cellini: an exquisite bit of old japan stands upon a few of the uniquely-bound volumes, which distinguish the Library. The proportionate sizes of these objects with regard to each other have been carefully preserved in the vignette.

XVIII.—PAGE 65.

THE SILVER-GILT LAMP of the Oratory.—A beautiful specimen of refined taste and successful execution.

XIX.—PAGE 66.

CORBEL OF THE SOUTH ORIEL.—This design, though in another style of composition, and different material, is marked with the same characteristics as the last. The centre shield is charged with the armorial bearings of

BECKFORD quartering Hamilton and Arran, Coward, and Hall.

The left-hand one, with

HALL, impaling Mervyn, Squire, Green, and Latimer.

And the other with

MERVYN quartering Squire, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Green, Latimer, and Besill.

XX.—PAGE 81.

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE COURT, near the Cloisters, called the Fountain Court.—It is of large dimensions, and when in full play, in calm weather, produces a very fine effect.

XXI.—PAGE 82.

A VIEW IN THE AMERICAN GARDENS.—Glimpse of the Bitham Lake may be seen in the bottom of the dell; and, rising from it on the opposite side, part of the immense plantations which reach the Beacon.

XXII.—PAGE 91.

THE NORWEGIAN HUT.—A block house of a tasteful character, planted on a little lawn, hemmed in by pines, larches, &c. on the southern base of the Beacon Hill, as a retreat in bad weather.

XXIII.—PAGE 92.

A SCENE IN THE ALPINE GARDENS.—The exhausted quarries in this part of the Estate are numerous, and full of the most picturesque effects. The neglect of this part by the late possessor, has considerably improved the appearance of these excavations. Nature has rioted with unchecked luxuriance, and every fissure throws out its wild flowers in profusion.

XXIV.—PAGE 96.

THE BOAT-HOUSE AND BATH at the northern extremity of the Lake in the Old Park. A spot long abandoned, but retaining marks of the correct taste of the designer. A short canal between the middle piers leads to the circular bath, round which is a broad path and pilastrade, carrying a groined vault. In a large niche at the further end, is a group of rocks; over which runs one of the springs which feed the Lake; smaller niches in the wall serve as seats. The ornaments are characteristic, formed of icicles, &c., but nothing can be more beautiful than some of the pale green weeds which now drop from the capitals, and hang down from the walls.

XXV.—PAGE 97.

FONTHILL GIFFORD CHURCH.—Erected by the late Alderman Beckford, in lieu of the ancient church, which stood within the park. The summit of the Abbey tower is seen in the distance.

XXVI.—PAGE 100.

HIGH PARK LODGE.—This is at the northern extremity of the Estate, and commands a grand view of the landscape scenery to the south, greater part of

which is occupied by the woods and water of Fonthill; from amidst the highest plantations of which, the Abbey rises in proud pre-eminence.

XXVII.—PAGE 103.

THE PAVILION, in the Old Park.—It belonged to the House which was taken down in 1808, and the site of the corresponding one is marked by some plantations. The church in the distance is that of Fonthill Gifford.

XXVIII.—PAGE 108.

THE CONVENT.—An elegant little design by the late James Wyatt, Esq. This was the first idea of any building on the site of the Abbey, and is the germ from which it has spread to its present magnitude.

THE ENTRANCE GATEWAY AND LODGE, NEAR FONTHILL BISHOP.



CHAPTER I.

The Approaches.

BEFORE we enter upon a delineation of Fonthill and its Abbey, it appears to us that we may with propriety devote a few pages to a rapid and very general description of the appearances which it presents to the traveller, in his approach to it on the three roads from London, from Bath, and from Shaftesbury.

The principal aspect of the country in the neighbourhood of Fonthill is supplied by that peculiar feature of English landscape, Downs. The greater

part of the demesne of the Abbey itself must have been, within a period comparatively little remote, of this character. Its bold undulations are now chiefly covered with woods, and its pastures have lost that "russet" tint, which denotes the absence of cultivation;—but it is still evident that the reign of art has not obliterated the traces of its affinity to the neighbouring hills; and we yet perceive that the hand of improvement is still working its great but silent changes.

The first glimpse which we catch of Fonthill on the road from LONDON, is on an eminence about four miles previous to entering the city of Salisbury. Looking across the barren plain and over a wooded country beyond, we see an object of extraordinary height and magnitude, rising out of the side of one of the highest hills on the horizon. It is the tower of the Abbey, at a distance of twenty miles. This object, from the windings of the road, is then lost, with the exception of one glance, till we have passed through the town of Wilton, and several pretty villages, to within seven miles of Hindon. It now bursts occasionally upon the anxious eye, shrouded at intervals by projecting masses of wooded scenery, or shut out by the hedge-rows of the narrow road. At length, as we ascend the hill of Chilmark, we obtain a grand and uninterrupted view of the Great Tower, and the heads of the inferior turrets soaring above the firs by which they are surrounded. We pause, to contemplate the extraordinary object which presents itself. At our feet is a fertile little vale; and the spire of a village church, rising out of elms of a century's growth, offers a pleasing and not unpastoral contrast to the proud giant of the neighbouring hills. Across this valley is an abrupt ridge, clothed with trees, which boldly terminates the view on the right—on the left is the finely wooded elevation of the neighbouring demesne of Compton House; and through this opening again rise the towers of Fonthill. The form of the hill on the side of which the Abbey stands, is certainly not picturesque; the horizontal line on either side is grand

and sweeping ; but this, the most important part, rises into an unpleasing cone, as formal and graceless as can be imagined.

We now entirely lose the view of the Abbey, till we arrive within a mile of Fonthill Bishop. We have reached the top of a very long and steep hill, and from this point the prospect is truly magnificent. The ridge, which at Chilmark formed the right of the picture, is now the left in the composition ; this carries us to the Beacon Hill, and thence to Hinckley Hill, on the side of which the Abbey stands ; beneath is the wood of the Old Park, with a glimpse of the Lake ; and beyond is the Terrace, stretching onwards till its plantations are lost in its distant descent ; the whole forming one of the most grand and imposing masses of woodland scenery which the imagination can picture. We can now plainly distinguish the octangular shape of the Great Tower ; and the summits of the eastern turrets, for the first time visible, give us some idea of the relative proportions of this extraordinary building.

At various turns of the road, as we approach the village of Fonthill Bishop, the towers of the Abbey present some very remarkable appearances, which are calculated to excite an overwhelming curiosity, and gradually prepare the visitor for the scene of magnificence which he is eager to contemplate. At length we pass through a part of Fonthill Bishop, and reach the Entrance-lodge, by a sudden turn of the road. We are within the Old Park, and near the site of the late mansion.

The Entrance-lodge is a building of considerable elegance. Tradition ascribes its design to Inigo Jones, and the tradition certainly does no discredit to that great master of English architecture. The wood-cut at the head of this chapter, presents a faithful and spirited representation of this interesting object.

The road from the Lodge through the Old Park is a public one ; and few roads to which the public have a right of access possess greater beauty. On

our left is a delightful lake, whose further bank is a bold elevation called the Alpine Gardens, covered with foliage of the most rich and varied character. On the right is the remaining wing of the former mansion, backed by a gentle undulation, which leads to the higher hills surrounding the Abbey. We continue our course till an easy ascent conducts us, amidst scenes of exquisite beauty, to the Inn called the Beckford Arms. We here quit the public road, and enter the more recent plantations. Every variety of shrub surrounds us, from the stately cedar to the graceful laburnum, and the windings of the road, and its diversities of surface, excite the most agreeable expectations of the scenery to which we are approaching. The Barrier-Gate is at length reached; and here the Abbey presents one of its grandest appearances. We do not see its base; but we see enough to judge of its extraordinary altitude,—and the richness of its ornament and the magnitude of its proportions, produce their full effect upon the mind of the astonished stranger. There are few points from which the great features of the building may be more advantageously contemplated.

The road from BATH presents Fonthill to our view, under somewhat different features. The principal object seen of the demesne, is that fine elevation, called the Terrace; and beyond this, the towers of the Abbey rise out of “a sea of pines” of extraordinary magnificence. The line of the horizon is here altogether grand and impressive; and the elevation of the building is distinctly and adequately felt. These appearances are presented upon a down, about two miles from Hindon, which we reach after two or three undulations of the road. Turning on the right in the centre of the town, and passing several ridges, we reach the Terrace. We do not cross this, but go through the tunnel, which has been constructed to avoid the steep ascent, and afford privacy to this part of the grounds. We pass a little vale of singular beauty, and reach

the Barrier, by the side of which we descend by a steep road for a short distance. We leave the picturesque cottages of the village of Fonthill Gifford, and ascend a deeply excavated road, till we reach the church. Our route soon terminates at the Beckford Arms.

The next picturesque approach to the Abbey, appears to us to be that of one of the roads from SHAFTESBURY. The scenery on this ride is uncommonly bold and romantic. The eye occasionally ranges over an immense valley, terminated only by the tower of Glastonbury; or meanders from hill to hill, grouped as it were by the sportive hand of nature, in the wildest and most fantastic arrangement. Having skirted the seat of Mr. Benett, we come upon the public road, which commenced at the Entrance Lodges. We pass some castellated cottages, which Mr. Beckford had erected, called Castle-town; and, as we descend the hill, the Abbey occasionally presents itself under the most favourable circumstances. The general view is much the same as that of the Barrier-Gate, but from our greater elevation, we occasionally behold the building almost to its base, and we are correspondently impressed with a deeper sense of its extraordinary proportions. The views upon this approach are altogether very varied and impressive; and the ride will amply compensate for the bad roads which have opposed our progress to Castle-town.

Having passed the Barrier-Gate, we are within that portion of Fonthill from which the world was, for so many years, so rigidly excluded. Our road to the Abbey lies up a very tiresome ascent, with an impenetrable wall of foliage, once only relieved by the exquisite prospects of the distant country. On our left, are the American Gardens and the Bitham Lake; on our right, the road to one of the other entrances through the Barrier. We at length reach the table-ground, upon which the Abbey stands. Our admiration is divided be-

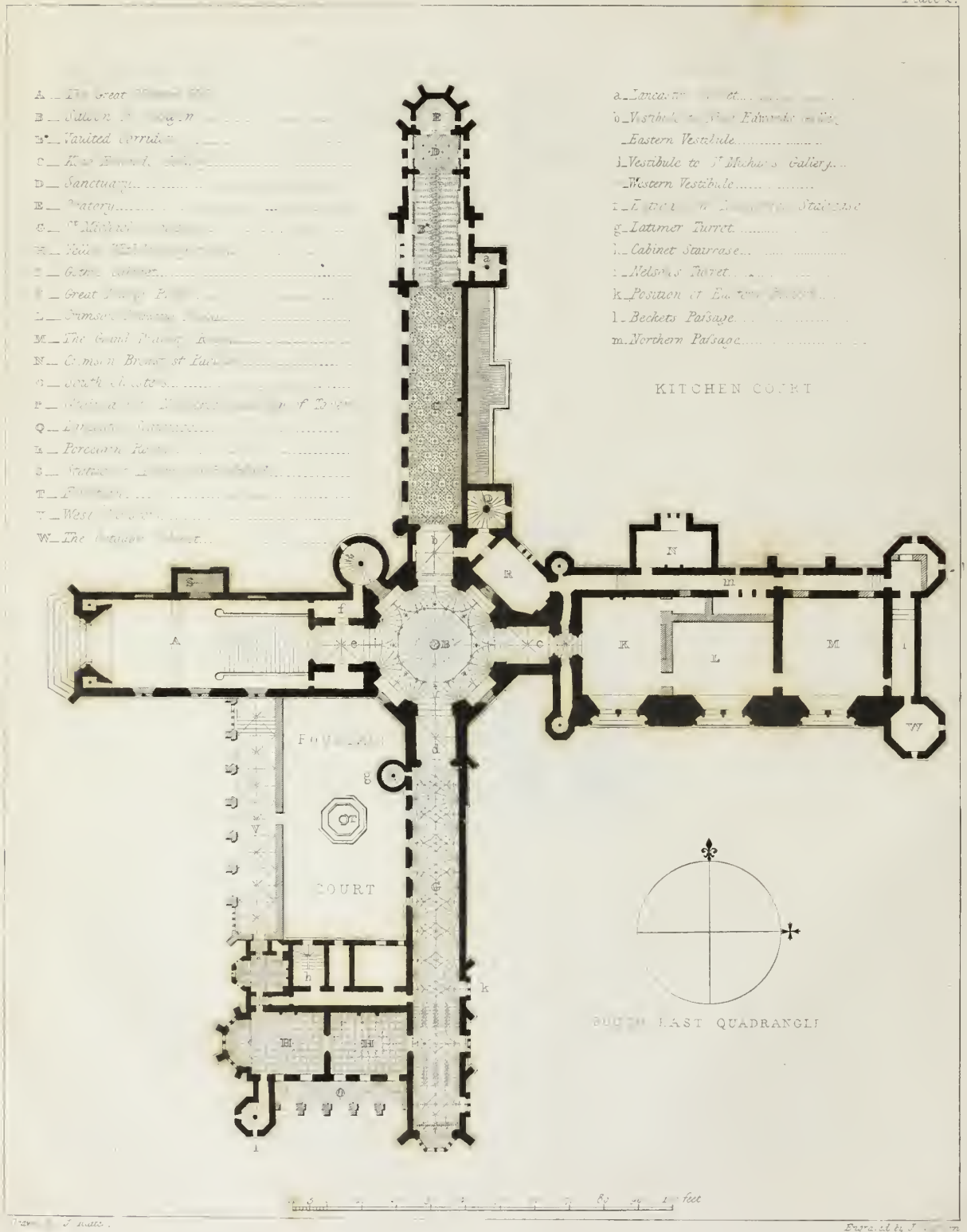
tween the magnificence of the building, and the beautiful scenery by which it is surrounded. But a natural and irresistible feeling carries us forward to the Interior, and we enter beneath the Oriel window of the Eastern Postern Tower.

THE EASTERN POSTERN TOWER.



FONTHILL ABBEY.

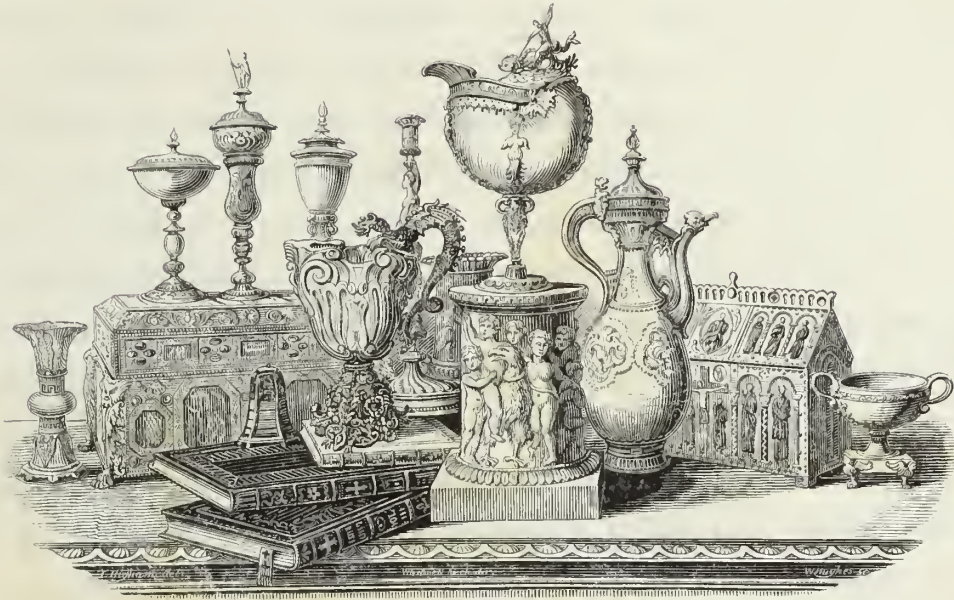
Plate 2.



PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL STORY.

The dotted lines represent the Ornamented Ceilings Groining &c.

A GROUPE OF THE RAREST ARTICLES OF VIRTU.



CHAPTER II.

The Interior.

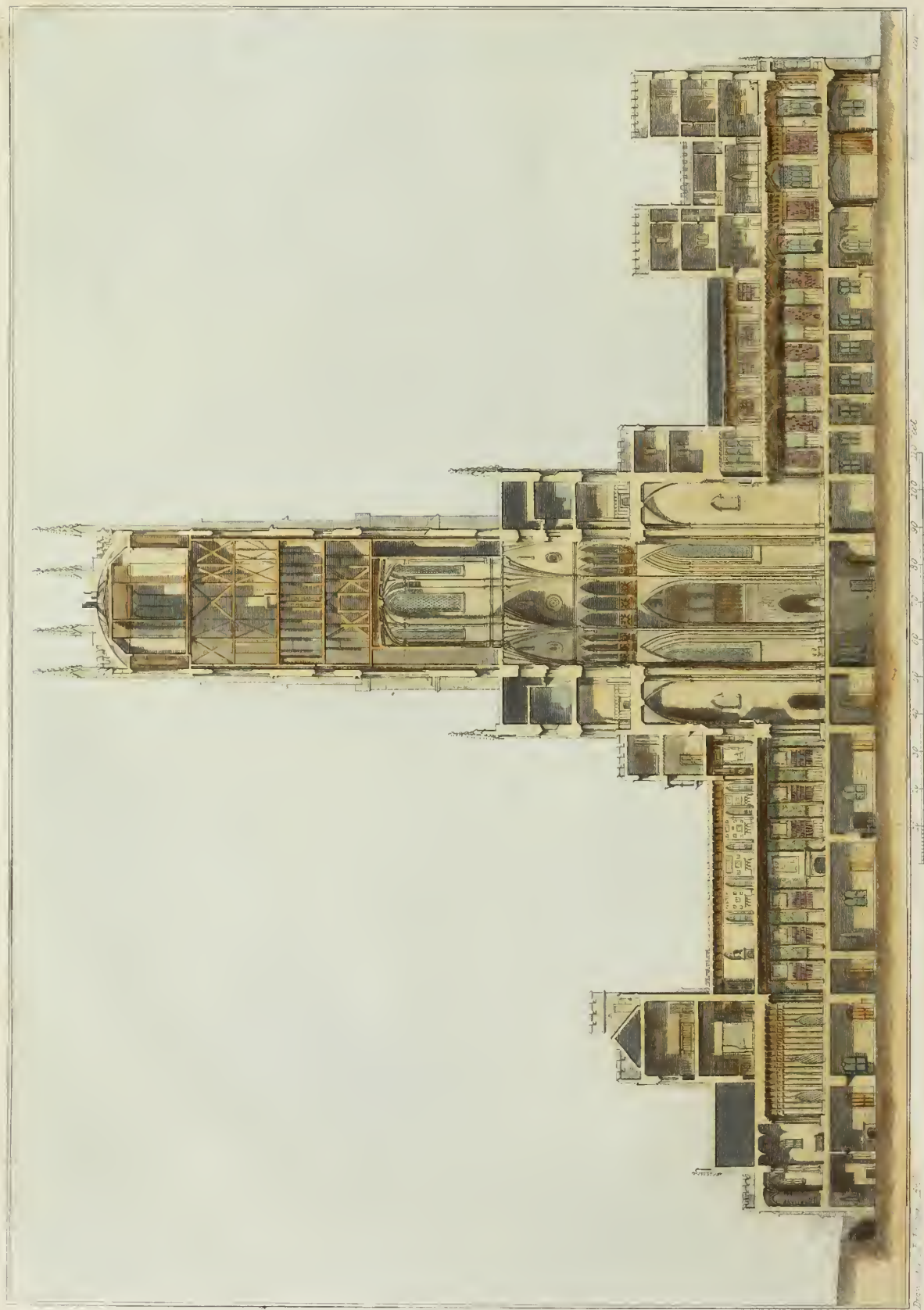
THE visitor to the Interior of Fonthill Abbey will probably at first be surprised by the modest pretensions of the entrance, through which he is ushered to scenes, in the anticipation of which he has most likely thrown the reins upon the neck of his imagination, and indulged it with unwonted licence. There is, however, a State-entrance on the other side of the Abbey, which will be found more in keeping with his preconceived notions of gran-

deur and magnificence; but the object proposed and obtained by entering at this Postern is, that the visitor may be conducted step by step towards the grand architectural features of the Abbey, and by thus gradually developing its most remarkable beauties, leave the mind ultimately to repose with a complete feeling of satisfaction on the scenes of splendour, that have been prepared for its gratification: by this route, we avoid astonishing the spectator, by a too sudden display of the colossal dimensions and unparalleled magnificence of the Abbey; a precaution, the neglect of which might produce a sensation of comparative indifference with regard to the minor beauties of the place; and something like dissatisfaction with the succeeding objects of ordinary magnificence.

The principle thus adopted, appears to us most consonant with those rules of art, which should apply as well to architecture as to poetry and painting. It is indeed desirable to produce an effect of surpassing delight and wonder, but then the effect should be kept up. The great attractions of the edifice are now judiciously husbanded, till many of the other apartments have been passed; inferior indeed to those unequalled portions, upon which the fame of the Abbey must mainly rest, but quite beautiful and brilliant enough to satisfy abundantly the ardour of a first curiosity.

In thus preferring a climax of agreeable and lofty sensations, to one overwhelming burst of amazement; we are preferring a continuous to a sudden, and from its intensity, necessarily an evanescent pleasure; and we sincerely think, that the ultimate effect of those extraordinary objects which were formerly addressed to the absolute bewilderment of our first impressions, is not in the slightest degree weakened by their present gradual developement.

We are therefore introduced to the Interior, by



LONGITUDINAL SECTION,

Die, und die 4 J. Mutter, Vatersbur,

I. The Eastern Entrance,

a small room, the common entrance, and a link of communication between the principal apartments and the offices. We turn to the left and descend into

II. The Southern Entrance Hall ;

an oblong apartment, scantily lighted, but of superior decoration, and entirely in the gothic style. The folding doors open upon the southern lawn, and the arch they close forms a massive frame to the wooded vale of Wardour Castle, and the distant hills beyond. In the centre of one of the compartments of the ceiling is the portcullis, and royal crown, the badge of Henry VII., from whom Lady Margaret Beckford was descended. The gothic entrance from this hall, looking back, presents an elegant “morceau” of architectural composition. The succession of the arches of the ceiling, the doorways, and the chimney-piece, diminishing as they recede, as well as the ascent of the floor, produce an artificial perspective, the effect of which is greatly heightened by a mirror, judiciously placed on the mantle ; this carries on the architectural vista and repeats the landscape.

A. The ceiling is vaulted, and divided into two groined compartments, by a broad arc-boutant in the middle. The piers and soffite of this arc are covered with two tiers of tall trefoil-headed reticulations ; the groined compartments are square, their diagonal mouldings having columns in the angles, from which spring mouldings which run along the groins and cross at the centre—similar mouldings mark the vertices of the arch ; bosses of foliage and fruit, one of them carrying an heraldic ornament, cover the intersections.

The floor is paved with squares of Portland stone truncated at the angles, and the spaces filled with small lozenges of black marble. The walls and ceiling have been jointed to represent stone, but part of the former have been injudiciously coloured pink. The splayed jambs of the northern doorway are

large, and filled with columns and astragals, separated by deep hollows. In those of the southern door the columns are omitted. The heads of these doorways and the curves of the ceiling are of the low pointed kind, but the window and western door have square heads; the mouldings also of these have been carelessly designed.

Dimensions, 27 ft. long, 18 ft. wide, 13 ft. high.

The scarlet door and the oak ones beyond it belong to

III. *The Oak Parlour,*

a very handsome room, so called from the oak with which its walls are fitted up, the deep colour of which blends finely with the dark damask blue and scarlet of the curtains, and sobered hues of the tapestry. A cloister or arcade of the most elegant pointed style affords shade and protection to the southern windows. Its piers divide the grand landscape before them into pictures of varied beauty. In one, the misty distance is the principal feature; in another, the deep sunken middle ground of wood embosoming the Bittern Lake; while others present the sloping lawn, which peacocks of the most dazzling whiteness, or hares in playful confidence, alternately possess, as the day advances or declines. Others again are occupied by the groups of trees which form the fore-ground and the lateral boundaries of the scene. The western windows are placed in the sides of a polygonal termination of the apartment, and look out upon another part of the lawn.

One of the large pieces of tapestry is a Sylvan feast of the Gods; the other a regal sacrifice to Apollo. The smaller ones are of little interest, but of different degrees of merit.

The figures in painted glass in the heads of the windows are small whole lengths of some of the most distinguished personages of Mr. Beckford's ancestry. Twelve of them are kings, crowned, sceptered, and robed; and

twenty knights in emblazoned armour, most of them of fine design and beautifully coloured.

The general effect of this apartment is rather unpleasing, from a want of proportionate height in the ceiling and windows; from a deficiency of harmony between the cold pink ground and pale yellow mouldings of the ceiling, compared with the warm and rich colour of the wainscoting of the walls; and from a discrepancy in the style of this wainscoting, and the pointed heads and tracery of the windows. There is also a cross light which destroys all the repose and quiet of the room. The three western windows should have been omitted, or their light so much subdued as to have been very subordinate to the five southern ones.

F. A double suite of curtains furnishes each window; the external ones of purple silk damask, bordered with the royal tressure of Scotland, as indicative of royal descent; the inner ones of scarlet moreen. On the south side are two dwarf bookcases, on which, and round the chimney mirror, are some specimens of bold carving in oak. At the east end are two tables of Sienna marble. In the piers, between the windows on the southern side, are girandoles of fine design and workmanship, from Fontainebleau. Oak branches, horns, deers' feet, and other emblems of hunting, are introduced into their design. The tables are covered with Dresden and Sevres china.

In the centre of the east end is a pile of massy decorative gilt plate of various styles and ages. Amongst these magnificent articles are, two salvers, with the initials of William and Mary; two ewers, by Moitte and Auguste; two tazzas by the same artists; an ancient dish and cover in the Moorish taste, made at Grenada; a pair of silver candlesticks, designed by Mr. Beckford; an engraved silver cup by Wighams, date 1624, from the Margravine of Anspach's collection.

A. The ceiling is reticulated by pale yellow-coloured mouldings, running diagonally, and forming meshes of a lozenge form on a pink ground; small bosses are placed on all the intersections of the mouldings.

The walls, where not covered with tapestry, are wainscoted with a fine deep brown oak; the doors and the fittings of the windows are the same.

They have the regular bold mouldings and raised pannels of the Anglo-Italian manner, which prevailed at the beginning of the last century, and are not gothic, as they ought to be, to harmonize with the window heads and their tracery.

The pointed arched heads of the windows have tracery, in the tall compartments of which are introduced, among others, figures of the following personages, executed in painted glass, by the late Mr. Eginton, from drawings by the late Mr. Hamilton, R. A.

Kings.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.
WILLIAM RUFUS.
HENRY I.
STEPHEN.
HENRY II.
RICHARD I.
JOHN.
HENRY III.
EDWARD I.
EDWARD II.
EDWARD III.
RICHARD II.

Knights.

ROBERT, EARL OF GLOUCESTER.
SIR HUGH BARDOLPH.
JOHN LORD MONTACUTE.
SIR HUGH HASTINGS.
ROBERT FITZ HAMON.
LAWRENCE HASTINGS, EARL OF PEMBROKE.
SIR REGINALD BRAY.
ARTHUR PRINCE OF WALES, SON TO HENRY VII.
SIR HUGH MARVILLE.
GILBERT DU CLARE, EARL OF GLOUCESTER.
SIR BRIAN STAPLETON.
SIR JOHN HARSICK, THE FATHER OF BISHOP GARDINER.

A figure from an ancient tomb in Malvern Abbey, Albert de Vere, second Earl of Oxford.

Two figures from the tomb of Edward Crookback, and a knight in armour.

In the other compartments of this tracery, is the red rose of Lancaster, in allusion to the descent of Mr. Beckford from Henry, Earl of Lancaster, grandson to Henry III., and other foliage of deep heavy coloured glass; the bad effect of which is to shut out on the south side the beautiful ceiling of the cloister, and to reduce the height and injure the proportion of all the window openings, originally too low.

The other parts of the windows are all glazed with costly plate-glass, the dimension of each pane being 41 inches by 21.

The floor is a very fine one, of oak.

The chimney piece is in the middle of the greatest length, and is of marble, without mantel, but of the same manner as the wainscoting.

Dimensions of the room 52 feet 6 inches long, 19 feet 4 inches wide, and 13 feet high.

H. All the knights but two are clothed in surcoats, on which are emblazoned their respective bearings.

We leave this room by

IV. A Passage,

and ascend by an easy circular staircase to its summit in

V. Nelson's Turret.

Where, upon an imitative porphyry pedestal with a gilt base, inscribed

BRONTE NELSON OF THE NILE,

is a bust of the late gallant admiral. It was placed here in commemoration of his visit to Mr. Beckford in the year 1801.

Passing this, we enter

VI. The Western Corridor,

fitted on one side with armoires and shelves, the latter of which carry part of the fine Dresden service which is in the oak parlour. The large window on the other side opens upon an embattled balcony, which commands a fine view of the dressed grounds lying on this side of the Abbey.

At the farther end of this corridor is

VII. *The Oak Library;*

an oblong and imposing apartment, with curtained recesses, of the same style of fitting-up as the oak parlour, but with the most perfect consistency throughout. The large window looks into the Fountain Court and Terrace;—upon the southern side of the western hall, and the towers, turrets, and buttresses which cluster round the base of the central tower. In addition to this, there are two beautiful windows of translucent glass, embellished with escutcheons and coloured borders, in which the Lancaster rose is introduced.

This room, formerly designated ‘the board of works,’ was devoted to the use of the artists who were employed upon the building designs of Mr. Beckford, and his architect, Mr. James Wyatt. On the shelves and in the armoires which surround it, the liberality of Mr. Beckford had deposited an extensive and costly collection of works in the fine arts for their information and study; and when it is recollected that his taste and judgement decided upon the selection, there can be no doubt of its excellence: the natural consequences of advantages like these, united with the actual execution of such works as the Abbey, must be, to form artists of more than ordinary ability. If we are not misinformed, the present Mr. Jeffrey Wyatt was one of the late architect’s pupils who enjoyed this rare opportunity.

F. The external window has curtains of crimson damask: the recesses are screened by similar ones, but of scarlet moreen. Every part of the walls is recessed for books, or formed into closets, or filled with cabinets. A fine mirror occupies a large pannel in the western recess; it was for a time almost the only instance in which this means of producing an effect was used in the Abbey. The carpet, which is a small reticulated lozenge pattern of scarlet and black, is continued from this room through all the suite upon this floor. A massive library table, covered with purple velvet, two armed chairs, and two candelabra carrying tripod lights, stand in the window recess; a pier table, richly ornamented with buhl and decorations in high relief, is placed beneath the mirror.

P. Two drawings on vellum, from Poussin.

A. The ceiling reticulated; quatrefoils, placed at a small distance from each other, have their curves and angles connected by right lines, on the intersection of which a boss is placed; the whole is of a light stone colour, and has rather a cold effect.

The walls are entirely wainscoted with deep brown oak, in large raised panels and bolection mouldings. All the doors of the entrances and of the closets form parts of the wainscoting, so as not to be evident upon a slight examination. This attention to the general effect, which even appears to have excluded a fire place, should have been carried a little farther, and forbidden the union of the imitative oak of some parts with the mahogany of others.

The external window is divided by a transom into six lights, each filled with one piece of plate glass 46 inches high, by $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. The internal windows have four lights, glazed with matted glass in lozenge lattice; each compartment has a rich border, and in the centre an emblazoned shield. They are painted by Pearson. These windows have slabs of Purbeck marble in them.

Dimensions 37 feet long, 16 feet 7 inches wide, and 11 feet 5 inches high.

H. In the side windows are the arms of Latimer, and of Mervyn, alternately, in allusion to the descent of Mr. Beckford from William, the first Lord Latimer, temp. Ed. I. through the ancient families of the Mervyns, Lords of the Manor of Fonthill Gifford. The red rose of the house of Lancaster, on square purple facettes, is inserted at intervals in the border, and connected by vine foliage.

To the right hand of the mirror in the western recess, is

VIII. *The Cedar Boudoir,*

an octangular little room, "walled with books," and completely realizing Montaigne's description of the form and contents of his tower study.

The concealment of the entrance on the outside gives that feeling of privacy and perfect seclusion to its inhabitant, which is a luxury of the highest order to a true bookworm. The bookcases, armoires, and ceilings, are princi-

pally of cedar, a wood not remarkable for its beauty, but of most delightful fragrance ; some of the mouldings, which are not particularly elegant, are gilt ; and cinquefoils, the armorial bearings of the house of Hamilton, ermined and edged with gold, are carved in low relief on the frieze.

One of the two little windows peeps upon the lawn, and catches the termination of the great western avenue ; in a fine day, the lofty tower, at a great distance, on the estate of Sir Richard Colt-Hoare, may be discerned.

Traversing the whole length of the Oak Library, a door in the bottom of the eastern recess opens into

IX. *An Anti Room,*

the apartment which connects this suite with the offices beneath, and the chambers of the attendants, &c.

P. La Bonne Prize.—*Greuze*. Views of Fonthill Mansion before the fire in 1755. A view of a still earlier mansion. The grand Chartreuse.—*Hollar*, 1649.

Crossing this, we enter

X. *The Anti Chamber,*

or Dressing Room ; the two small windows at a great height, and four doors, make it dark and uncomfortable ; although it contains the only fire-place on this floor.

F. Two oak plate-glazed cabinets ; a bookcase, decorated with buhl ; a sea-green vase ; a table of Brazilian wood ; several engravings.

A. The walls are pink and ceiling white ; all the wood-work oak. The chimney-piece in the gothic taste, and of common stone.

Dimensions 14 ft. 2 in. long, 13 ft. 3 in. wide.

From this to the south is

XI. *The Eastern Corridor,*

vaulted and fitted up with wardrobes in the two recesses; a stove has been added in a third, upon the door of which is the portcullis; over it is a basso-relievo in bronze.

We now enter

XII. *The Gallery Cabinet.*

Here, in this cell (for its petty dimensions, small windows, and absence of all means of warmth and ventilation, forbid any other appellation) slept, upon a narrow couch, without hangings, the founder of this sumptuous abbey—the possessor of its accumulated treasures.

The extremely simple style of every thing in this chamber was a striking contrast, and the only one, to the splendour of every other room in this extraordinary place; but it is now decorated in a corresponding style of elegance.

F. A circular table of Florentine mosaic; two India japan cabinets; a cabinet of ebony, decorated with buhl and Florentine mosaic; a coffer of Amboyna wood; a Chinese incense burner; a Japanese incense burner; two oriental porcelain beakers; vase of rosso antico; a pair of candlesticks, modelled after Cellini; vase in or-moulu; several vases of Sevres porcelain.

P. Landscape. *Ruysdel.*—The dropsical woman. *G. Dow.*—Ruins. *Vanderheyden.*—Man selling fish. *Mieris.*—Portrait of King Charles I. *Jansen.*—Sunset. *Both.*

We now repass XI. and cross X., the gloom of which gives considerable effect to the perspective of

XIII. *The Vaulted Library,*

so called from its ceiling. Each side of this narrow vista is lined in the inter-

vals, between its miniature windows, with bookcases and armoires of oak, filled with volumes on all subjects ; a splendid mirror at the end carries on the perspective ; at its foot is a pile of valuable articles on a rich commode of japan.

A. The ceiling is a high-pointed continued arch, into which the smaller ones of the windows groin at a low height ; moulded ribs at small intervals rise from the springing to the crown, and there butt against a longitudinal one running the whole length ; bosses cover all the junctions. The mouldings are stone colour, on a very faint pink ground.

Dimensions 44 ft. long, 6 ft. 3 in. wide, 10 ft. high.

The northern end of this library runs into

XIV. *The Chintz Boudoir,*

a charming little apartment opening to the east by a fine plate-glass transom window, which commands a fore-shortened view of the southern façade and its stately turret, backed by the fir grove on Hinkley Hill, and a glimpse of a beautiful distance. To the south we have the retrospective view through the library, to the little window of the gallery cabinet.

F. Commode of japan and verd antique ; two bronze vases from the Borghese palace ; pair of oriental vases ; an embossed China bason ; pair of candlesticks, after the designs of Cellini ; the piping boy, a bronze ; a piece of carving.

P. St. Francis. *L. Caracci*.—Virgin and Child with Figures. *Van Eyck*.—Two subjects from the Apocalypse. *West*.

A. The ceiling is an imitation of oak, open floored, the joists are light and moulded. The walls are covered with yellow chintz of a damask pattern, and recessed for books, vases, &c. In the one to the north was once a balcony, which opened into St. Michael's gallery.

Dimensions 12 ft. long, 10 ft. 3 wide, 11 ft. 6 high.

The defects of this suite of apartments, so far as respect convenience and personal comfort, are too evident, particularly when it is considered that they

were intended for and occupied by Mr. Beckford himself; but it is impossible not to admire their privacy, and the studied provision for intellectual indulgence and literary enjoyment.

In the further corner of the Chintz Boudoir, opposite to the window, is

XV. *The Latimer Turret,*

in which a circular staircase conducts us down to

XVI. *The Vestibule of St. Michael's Gallery.*

Here let us pause—glancing at, but not entering, the gallery on our right; for before us is the central wonder of the Abbey—the loftiest apartment which domestic architecture can present, probably, *in the world!*

It is filled with an illuminated atmosphere of its own. The towering windows, and the walls whereon the sun-beams fall, gorgeously glow with a mosaic, of the most brilliantly tinted light: recovering from this fascinating luxury of colour, with what eagerness the eye runs up the astonishing altitude of the arches! with what delight it feels, as it were by instinct, the stately proportions of the piers which divide them! How it ranges around and among the arches of the beautiful gallery above, speculating upon the extent of the golden lines the ceilings within them; and then, guided by the route of the ascending tracery, it shoots upwards into the distant light, and remote decorations of the Lantern, which crowns

XVII. *The Grand Saloon,*

or, as it is usually called, from the form of its ground plan—The Great Octagon.

Radiating from it, as the centre of the whole, run the four grand divisions of the edifice, each presenting a coup d'œil, of a character essentially differing from the others, but all extraordinary, magnificent, and powerfully interesting.

To the west, the eye, after lingering among the blazonry, and the intricacies of the "embowed roof," shoots through the western hall and principal entrance, and rejoices in the soft green, and interminable length of The Great Avenue, and in the pure and simple light of external day.

To the north, it glances through the window of the Tribune into the Lancaster Gallery ; beneath, it penetrates beyond the perspective of King Edward's Gallery and its countless decorations,—and is lost in uncertainty among the increasing shadows of the Sanctuary, and the tempered light of the Oratory beyond it.

Through the *chiaro-oscuro* of the elegant portal of the east flashes the radiance of the splendid *meubles* of the cabinet room to which it leads ; and over it rises the superb architectural façades of the Music Gallery and the Organ Loft, pannelled with golden lattice, on grounds of scarlet damask.

To the south, St. Michael's Gallery presents a specimen of the richest combinations, which the genius of gothic architecture has yet invented, beautifully contrasted with the artificial gloom of the opposite gallery, by terminating in an oriel-window of painted glass, exposed to the rays of a meridian sun.

In three of the lofty recesses above the scarlet curtains, which fill the lower parts of them, are the celebrated windows of stained glass, the boast of the Abbey ; a profusion of deeply-tinted Lancastrian roses are imbedded in quatre-foils of purple, bordered with gold. Through the transparently glazed gilt lattice of the fourth recess, we see several revolutions of the Great Tower Staircase, curling round its enormous central column, the passengers on which retire, and re-appear successively, some whirling down, and others labouring up " the



SECTION OF THE GRAND SALOON, VESTIBULES, NUNNERIES, &c.

Looking East.

Published June 2^d 1843 by J. F. Patten Stationery

eleven hundred stairs;* but both pursuing, with unabated eagerness, their desire for new subjects of wonder.

If, after this panoramic survey, we review the chastened beauty of the upward perspective, depending entirely upon form and “*chiaro-oscuro*” for its effect, and which, improbable as it may appear to those who have not seen it, emulates the length of the horizontal views; we may assert, without fear of contradiction, that, examined from this point of view, Fonthili Abbey is at present unequalled.†

F. A few ottomans and bergieres are placed in the recesses, and scarlet drapery, falling from the window sills, lines the lower part of them; but it is not long since, that purple curtains descended in ample folds from the apex of the great arches, to the floor of the saloon, at the extremity of each vestibule; we lament their removal, even though the stupendous organ-front has been given in exchange. By judicious management, nothing would be screened by them which ought not to be concealed; and nothing would give such repose and limit to this grand apartment, and prevent that distraction and confusion, which the full exposure at the same moment of several magnificent scenes must necessarily produce.

A. The plan of the saloon is an equal-sided octagon; the height is divided by horizontal mouldings into four principal parts: the first, reaching from the floor of the saloon to the gallery of the Nunneries; the second, finishing at the level of the abacus of the angular columns; the third, running up to the foot of the Lantern; the fourth, the Lantern.

In the first, or lower division, each side is perforated with a lofty pointed arch; four of them are deeply recessed, and contain the several entrances; the other four are shallower, and in them are placed the windows; the piers are decorated with slender columns, and deeply relieved mouldings.

The second division contains the Arcade, which opens into the Nun-

* Vathek.

† A still deeper interest is given to this scene, when it is known that it was executed from a sketch made by Mr. Beckford himself. The colossal height of its dimensions, the defiance of all common-place or ordinary arrangement, and the daring originality of its design, were probably far beyond the range of his professional architect, whose *forte* lay in the production of the elegant, rather than the sublime.

neries, and the corridors which connect them. These arches are twenty-four in number, three in each side of the octagon: they are all open and of the same form as those below; a parapet perforated with quatre-foils, and decorated with shields, fills the lower part of each: their piers have clusters of tripled columns. A column 90 feet high, placed in each angle of the great octagon, runs from the floor up through both of the last mentioned divisions, and finishes with a rich carved capital. At this level, the third division commences, and is occupied entirely by the arches springing from the angular columns, which, expanding on all sides, form the circular corbels, on which stands the Lantern: the arched sides of the octagon in this division are not open, but they have Catherine wheel apertures in circular architraves (giving light to another passage, which goes round the octagon,) and a loop hole above over each; escutcheons with the cross and cinque-foil alternately are placed in the ceiling between the corbels, and others hang beneath the feet of the Nunnery piers.

The fourth, or uppermost division, is the Lantern; the angles of its octagonal plan are truncated, so as to produce eight additional narrow sides. In each of the angles formed by this means, is placed a slender column; from the narrowness of the additional sides, two of these columns are brought nearly together, forming eight pairs, and standing on a low continued pedestal, through which their plinths descend into the open space below, and finish in pendants and carved bosses; moulded ribs rise from each capital, and dividing and spreading over a vaulted ceiling of a very low curvature, meet at the centre in a boss of uncommon size, ornamented with foliage; an annular moulding surrounds it, decorated with eight smaller bosses. The under sides of the Lantern have pointed windows glazed with matted glass, in panes of a lozenge form, edged with yellow; a border of foliage on a deep orange ground surrounds each window; the effect of all which is lost below from the great projection of the metal lattice work.

Three only of the lower windows admit light to the saloon; these are entirely filled with brilliant stained glass of purple, crimson, and yellow, in a tessellated pattern. The omission of the coloured glass in the fourth infuses perhaps some feeling of disappointment, where otherwise all would be unmingled admiration and delight.

The ceiling of each Vestibule is groined, and also along its principal lines, which rise and separate themselves from the mass which is accumulated in the piers—a boss covers the central intersection; they have no windows, but here and there a blank of no meaning. The north and south Vestibules have tribunes over the entrances to the two grand galleries, one of which only is now accessible.

The colouring of the walls of these parts of the interior of the Abbey is chalky and cold : perhaps it may have faded from its first colour, for where it is not tinted by either the transmitted or reflected light, it is harsh and unpleasing.

H. The Lancaster rose is strewed over the coloured windows. The arms of Latimer and of Bellomont in relievo alternately in the triangular spandrels beneath the Lantern. The arms of Latimer, Scotland, Saxon Kings, and Bellomont, in relievo, at the foot of the piers of the Nunnery arcades, in the same order on each face of the Octagon.

Inclining to the left, towards the principal or state entrance, we stop in

XVIII. The Western Vestibule,

which unites the Grand Saloon with it.

In this the lofty arches are both open to their summits ; on each side are smaller arches, one of which opens into the Lobby of the Great Tower Staircase. From the floor of this Vestibule, we may advantageously survey

XIX. The Great Western Hall.

What a magnificent fore-ground does it form to the grand avenue which extends beyond it. The majestic descent of the broad steps, and their arched parapets ; the lofty wainscoting and the pointed arches of the walls, filled with the most beautiful glazing, or hidden by crimson draperies, or retiring into a recess which sculpture has dignified with the effigy of a great man ; the darkly coloured and elaborately framed roof, displaying in its ample frieze the emblazoned shields of a distinguished ancestry, with all its minutest and most common parts moulded, and arranged into ornamental forms ; the massive piers of the Great Portal pierced to give light and access to the staircases within them ; the Minstrel's Gallery which surmounts them ; the sculptured surfaces beneath it ; the vivid splendour of the little window over ; and the grand contour of the

noble archway, which the gigantic doors seem waiting to close up for ever,—all contrast powerfully with the light, the freshness, and the depth of the “marble air,” and the delicate colouring and simple outline of the external scene.

Attracted irresistibly, we suspend our pursuit of the triumphs of art, descend the steps, and make a short excursion on the Lawn, to breathe for a few moments amidst the charms of highly cultivated nature, and to court relief from the sense of weight, which intense admiration often produces. We turn to re-enter, and the whole west front of the Abbey arrests our attention. The lofty tower now distinguishes the centre of an immense line of other towers and curtains, stretching to the north and south, plainly indicating how much we have yet to explore in the interior. We re-enter to complete our task. As we pass the threshold, the height of the archways, and the dimensions of the doors, are felt with surprise ; and we re-commence our career of wonder by a distant view of the scene of our former astonishment, through the almost faulty elevation of the Western Vestibule.

We ascend leisurely the spacious steps, watching the gradual developement of an architecture, which, from the stateliness of its parts, the masterly arrangement of the *chiaro oscuro*, the atmosphere of the coloured light, and the solemn brilliancy of the windows, produces an effect very little removed from the sublime.

F. In the centre niche is a statue of little merit, by S. F. Moore, of the celebrated Alderman Beckford, the father of the present Mr. Beckford ; he is in his official robes, as Lord Mayor of London, standing, and in the act of speaking, probably delivering the patriotic reply to the King. On the base is inscribed

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM BECKFORD,
LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON,
MDCCCLXIII. MDCCCLXX.

FONTMILL ABBEY.



Drawn by Geo. Catlin.

INTERIOR OF THE GREAT WESTERN HALL,

Leading to the Grand Saloon or Octagon.

Engraved June 21. 1835 by J. Roberts. Shute & Co.

A. The roof is open to the apartment, and presents a rich combination of moulded and carved timber work, painted in imitation of old oak, and decorated with emblazoned escutcheons; it is divided into three large and two smaller compartments, by four trusses.

The framing of the upper part of each of the trusses is of a triangular form, resting upon an arched rib, the feet or springers of which terminate in pendants and carved bosses; and from the same pendants spring similar arched ribs, at right angles to the last, to carry the purlins. The spandrils, and all the other intervals, are filled with trefoil-headed apertures. A broad frieze runs along the side walls at the foot of the rafters, and breaks round the upper part of each bracket; upon this are hung 76 emblazoned escutcheons.

Upon the trusses lie the moulded purlins, and rafters of a roof, whose upper angle is very acute. The walls are finished in imitation of stone; they are lined to 11 feet high, with oak wainscoting, divided into narrow upright panels by a broad projecting moulding, with excellent effect. On the south side are three pointed arch windows, and opposite to them on the north three recesses of the same form. The windows have a central mullion transom and tracery, the body filled with panes of matted glass of a lozenge form, having each a quatre-foil in outline upon it, surrounded by a richly coloured border of foliage. In the tracery are armorial badges and bearings of stained glass.

The centre recess on the south side is of considerable depth; a curtain partially screens it, and within it is placed the statue described in the preceding page; the other recesses are shallow, and are closed with drapery.

The aperture on the west side, which is the principal entrance, is a pointed arch filled with massive oak folding doors, thirty-one feet high, and thirteen feet wide. The piers which carry them are of large dimensions, and within them are the stairs to the Minstrel's Gallery, or Music Loft, which stretches over the entrance from one side to the other. A low arcade of trefoil-headed apertures forms the front of this Gallery—its soffite and the spandrils of the arch are reticulated with and carry escutcheons. Over it is a small pointed arch window of painted glass; the subject of which is the Madonna and Child. Beneath is hung a piece of tapestry, from the cartoon of Paul preaching at Athens.

The eastern side of the Grand Saloon is approached from the Lawn, through this Hall, by three successive flights of stone steps: the first having four, the second three, and the third twenty-two. These last do not run the whole width of the Hall, but leave a passage on each side, from which are doors of communi-

cation to the Western Cloister, the Sub-Octagon, and the Great Tower Staircase ; an octangular pedestal, ornamented with quatre-foil panels, stands at each end of the first step, and from them runs a perforated stone parapet up each side of the flight, of the same design as the front of the Minstrel's Gallery. On the summit of these steps is the Western Vestibule of the Grand Saloon, whose lofty arches, though defying all rivalry, have yet a small aperture of the same form, placed on each side of them, to give, it is supposed, the unnecessary aid of contrast.

H. In the first window from the east, surrounded by a circle of eight red roses, within the garter, and surmounted by a regal crown, the arms of King Edward the Third. In the second, with the same accompaniments, the arms of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and King of Castile and Leon. In the third, the garter omitted, and a coronet in the place of a crown, the arms of Scotland impaling Beaufort.

In the south spandril over the great entrance, in relievo, are the arms of Beckford.

In the north spandril are the arms of Gordon-Aboyne. In the soffite over the centre, the arms of Latimer, with the escutcheons of Bellomont on each side.

On the frieze of the roof, beginning at the N.W. angle, and going east, in the following succession, are emblazoned the arms of

BECKFORD.
HERING.
HAMILTON.
HAMILTON WITHOUT ARRAN.
LESLIE.
MUIR.
ABERNETHY.
ROSS.
COMYN.
QUINCY.
BELLOMONT.
MELLENT.
GWADYR.
FITZ OSBERT.
YVERY.
GRANTESMESNIL.
GALLOWAY.
MORVILLE.
DAVID, EARL OF HUNTINGDON.

SCOTLAND.
SAXON KINGS.
WALTHEOF.
ALDRED.
KEVELIOC.
GERNONS.
MERCHINES.
LUPUS.
ALGAR.
CAITHNESS.
DOUGLAS OF DALKEITH.
DOUGLAS, (ANCIENT.)
CRAUFURD.
DOUGLAS, (AUGMENTATION.)
READING.
COWARD.
HALL.
BESILL.

This series is repeated on the southern side.

Arrived again in the Western Vestibule, our route lies directly across the Grand Saloon ; glancing at the extraordinary scenes on each side of us as we pass, we reach

XX. *The Eastern Vestibule,*

partially closed at its farther side, by the beautiful front of the Music Gallery, richly sculptured and decorated with mouldings, &c. ;—beyond and over which, in the shade of a deeper recess, is the Organ Loft, constructed in the manner of an ancient altar screen. 'This is one of the most perfect specimens of design in the Abbey, and has seldom been equalled. The detail, and the *tout-ensemble* are in perfect harmony ; the proportions have been adjusted with the most profound skill ; and the sparing introduction of the gold, the damask, and the velvet, in the apertures, and on the cushions, has heightened the effect to a degree so perfect, that the smallest addition would be injurious. In the lower part is

XXI. *The Portal,*

the style of which is extremely elegant, and the four openings are managed with great ingenuity.

A. The front of the Music Gallery is very rich in architectural ornament ; the ground is covered from the floor to the parapet with tracery, in two tiers of oblong panels, having trefoil finishings at each end ; this panel work is surmounted by an enriched cornice, upon which stands an elaborately carved parapet of quatre-foils, lozenge-wise, having shields in their centres.

A pointed arch doorway perforates the lower part of the Gallery, and leads into the Octagonal Portal, which communicates on the south side with the staircase leading to the Organ Loft and Music Gallery ; and on the north with the

passage which connects the China Room and the east wing; and in front with the Great Dining Room. The interior of this porch has columns in its angles, mouldings from which run over a groined ceiling, with bosses at the intersections: externally, the archivolt, decorated with crockets, sweeps up into a beautiful finial.

The Organ Screen is of stone, and has three compartments in height, and five in width: the lowest tier is closed, having trefoil headed panels in low relief. The apertures of the second tier have cinque-foil heads, and are filled with panels of brass, perforated with quatre-foils on a ground of scarlet damask.

The third tier is open, but has a perforated parapet, with quatre-foils and shields.

This screen has been recently erected from a design by Mr. Beckford.

From the Portal, we enter a suite of apartments, which, though magnificent in dimensions, style, and furniture, has been intended for temporary convenience only. The ultimate destination of this part of the Abbey was for a far nobler purpose. Mr. Beckford has the very curious and singular distinction of an immediate and lineal descent from all those Barons, (of whom any issue are remaining,) who extorted, at the point of their swords, from a reluctant and tyrannical sovereign, the Magna Charta, that great foundation of our liberties; and it was to commemorate a transaction, so truly important and venerable, that he designed the Eastern Transept of the edifice, proposing to complete it in a splendour, which, like the illustrious names and blazonry it was intended to display, should admit of no rival.

Our regret for the absence of the architectural effects, which the “mighty master” would have distributed over this, the last, the noblest addition to the Abbey, may, perhaps, for a time be suspended by a *coup d’œil* of the assemblage of furniture, paintings, and valuables, with which these rooms are filled; every piece of which is remarkable, either for its excellence, its costliness, or its rarity; and many of them, for all these qualifications.

The first apartment of the suite is

XXII. *The Great Dining Room,*

spacious, and of a cubical form, ceiled with massive beams laid nearly close together, and lighted by one vast window of gilt lozenge lattice, looking to the south over the quadrangle, and the vale beyond. The walls are covered with pictures upon hangings of a crimson colour. A retrospective glance through the Portal reaches the Grand Avenue, over a new and effective foreground.

F. Crimson curtains, with an heraldic border, draw over the doors, the window, and the recess. Two oriental alabaster slab tables. A table of ebony and Verde antique. Two armoires, designed by Le Brun, from the collection of the Duc d' Aumont. A commode of ebony, japan, and Italian marble. Two ebony armoires, inlaid with Florentine mosaic. Two crystal cabinets, in the style of Camillo Maderno, formerly belonging to Pope Paul V. Two carved ivory vases; on one, the Triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite; on the other, a dance of Bacchantes. Youth and Age, a groupe in ivory, by Fiamingo.

A. The ceiling is of a singular character, and not quite free from an air of rudeness; joists nearly of the magnitude of beams are laid near to each other, and parallel to the window, so that their shadows are deep and powerful; they are moulded on their upper sides, and painted in imitation of oak.

The window is the lower part only of one of three lofty arched openings in the southern façade of the Transept. It stands in a deep expanding recess, lined with oak framing of a bold character. The chimney piece is in the same style of Brescia marble.

Dimensions 22 feet square, and 22 feet high.

H. On the border of the curtains is woven the Latimer cross, and the Hamilton cinque-foil.

P. A landscape, from the Duc de Choiseul's cabinet. *Claude*. — A Martyrdom. *Palma*. — Portrait of Wife of the Burgomaster Ordiers. *Slingeland*. — St. Jerome at devotion, from the monastery of St. Benedict at Malta; the companion of the Communion of St. Jerome, in the British Institution. *Paul Veronese*. — Portrait of a young Nobleman. *Vandyke*. — Interior of a Saloon of Pictures. *Van Opstael*. — Landscape, Diana and Acteon. *Albano*. — Adoration of the Shepherds. *Philip de Champagne*. — The Conflagration of Troy. *Peter Peters Breughel*. — Landscape. *Cuyp*.

We proceed to the right-hand eastern door; and we are struck by one of those “infinite series” of doors, which was the great effort of the architects, and patrons of the last century, to produce and possess.

XXIII. *The Crimson Drawing Room,*

which is *en-suite* with the last, and similarly furnished.

F. Six carved ebony chairs, from the palace at Esher, and belonging formerly to Cardinal Wolsey. Two cabinets of buhl and serpentine marble. An ebony jewel cabinet, set with rubies and emeralds, the figures designed by Bouchardon. A japan commode, formerly in the possession of the late Queen of France. An armoire of buhl and tortoiseshell, made for Lewis XV.; from the king’s cabinet at Versailles. A coffer of japan, made for Maria, the daughter of the celebrated Van Diemen; it has been successively in the possession of Madame de Pompadour, and the Duc de Bouillon.

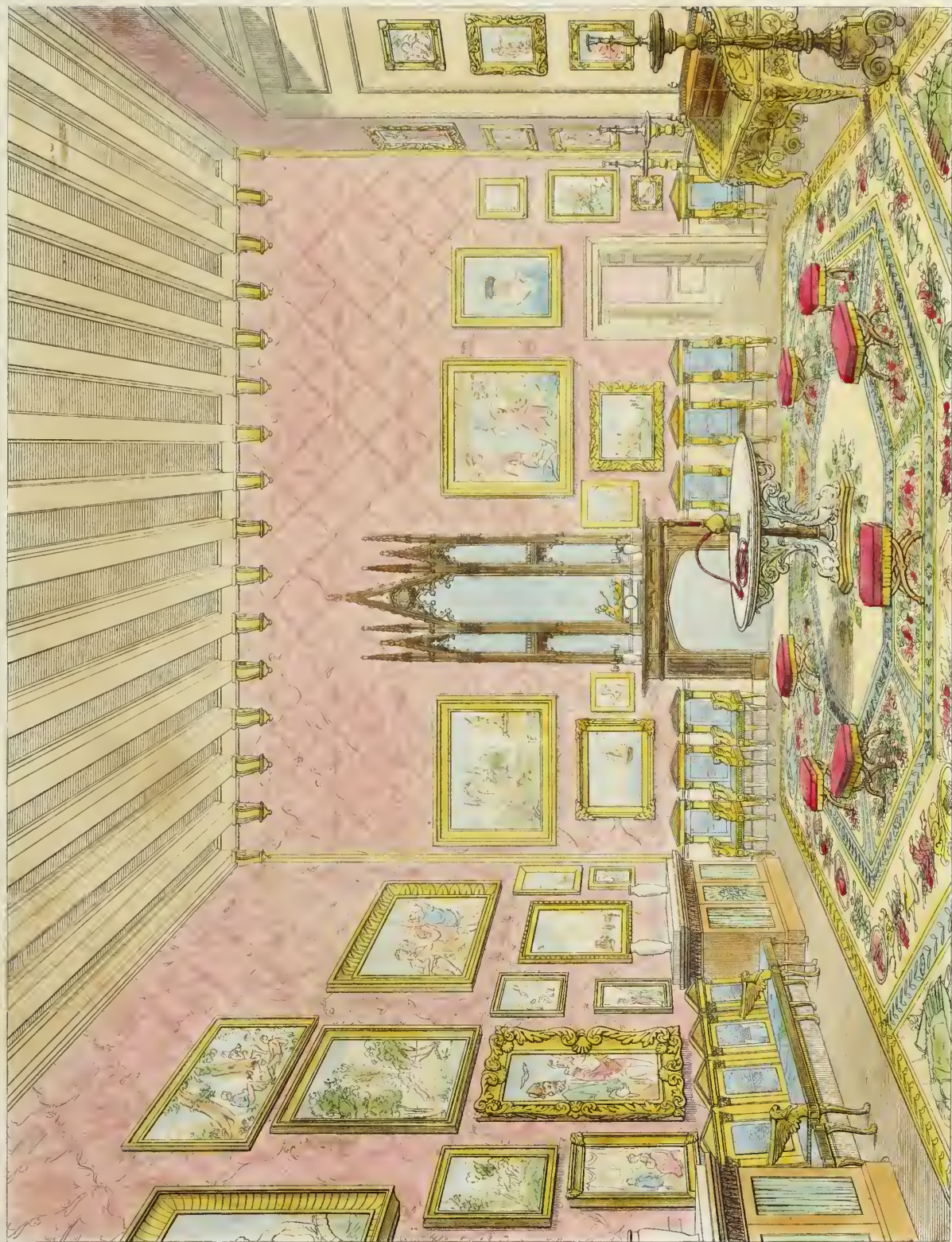
A. Dimensions, 27 feet long, 19 feet wide, 22 feet high.

P. Sibylla Lybica, from Ferrara, afterwards in the Marquis of Lansdown’s collection. *Lud. Caracci.*—The Wise Men’s Offering. *Rubens.*—Landscape, and the Woodcutter. *Wouvermans.*—Sea View, from the collection of Mr. Vandergucht. *Backhuysen.*—The Skittle-players, from the Duc Praslin’s collection; and the Topers. *Teniers.*—Flowers, from the Praslin Cabinet. *Van Huysen.*—The Infant Saviour, and the Laughing Boy, formerly in the Arundell collection. *Da Vinci.*—Landscape and Figures. *Gaspar Poussin.*—Portrait of St. Louis Gonzaga, from the Marquis of Lansdown’s collection. *Bronzino.*

Opposite to the door of entrance, is that of

XXIV. *The Grand Drawing Room,*

magnificent in dimensions and decorations, of the same style as the two preceding rooms, but of a higher degree of finish. The ceiling beams are carried



THE GRAND DRAWING ROOM.

at their ends by carved and gilt corbels, and the hangings are of garter-blue silk damask, embellished with gold mouldings. The burnished gilt chairs are covered with the same. In the centre of the room, upon a carpet of extraordinary costliness, stands a table of Egyptian marble, the largest slab of the kind in Europe.

F. A suite of chairs, gold and purple damask. A circular table of brèche universelle, from Malmaison. Four buhl candelabras with candlesticks, with designs from Cellini. An ivory cup and cover, carved by Magnus Berg, medallist to the Emperor of Germany. Two vases of carved ivory, by Fiamingo, previously in the possession of the Earl of Arundell; lately of B. Germaine, and the Margravine of Anspach. An oriental hookah of carved jad, set with precious stones, formerly belonging to Tippoo Saib.

P. The Four Ages, from the collection of the Marquis of Bath. *Watteau*.—A Village Fete, “The sign of Teniers,” and the interior of a Kitchen. *Teniers*.—Abraham and Isaac. *West*.—The Poulterer’s Shop, from the Duc de Choiseul’s collection. *G. Dow*.—Landscape, “the Diamond,” from the Le Brun collection. *Karle du Jardin*.—Landscape and Figures. *Wouvermans*.—Le Jardin d’Amour, portraits of Rubens, his Wife, Vandyke and Snyders, the subject of the Chapeau de Paille. *Rubens*.—A Sea Port, “L’Embarquement des Vivres,” from the Duc de Praslin’s Cabinet. *Berghem*.—Joseph telling his dream, from the collection of the Count Morel de Vaude. *Victor*.—Portrait of a Rabbi. *Rembrandt*.

Having exhausted the treasures of this room, we cross the end of

XXV. Becket’s Passage,

(so called from the subject of a lofty painted glass window, in chiaro-oscuro, by Pearson, of the celebrated Archbishop, after a design by the late President West) to

XXVI. *The Octagon Cabinet,*

a small room of fine proportions, hung with crimson silk. Through the narrow window is an exquisite glimpse of the distant landscape.

On the walls are paintings and miniatures of the highest finish.

A. The plan octangular;—the ceiling and cornice are of oak, with gilt mouldings. The frieze of the latter has an heraldic ornament. The walls are hung with crimson silk, edged with burnished gold. The chimney piece is characteristic, and of Purbeck marble, with carved escutcheons.

Re-entering Becket's Passage, and pursuing it as far as the figure, we turn on the left into

XXVII. *The Great Northern Passage.*

In this, and in Becket's Passage, are several paintings. About half-way on the right hand is

XXVIII. *The Crimson Breakfast Parlour,*

on the position of the intended Grand Staircase, but fitted up for, and appropriated to, the secretary of the late possessor. This explains the inconvenient height and form of the window.

Again following the Great Northern Passage, it leads to

XXIX. *The Porcelain Room,*

a low apartment, fitted up with cabinets, in which is a most valuable collection, principally of oriental china, but containing some very fine specimens of

Dresden and French. Some estimate may be formed of the extent of this collection, when it is known that there are at least two hundred dozen of cabinet plates, of the finest quality.

We now traverse

XXX. *The Lobby;*

and, turning to the left hand, enter

XXXI. *The Vestibule of King Edward's Gallery.*

Here the Great Octagon presents itself: but we must turn from its dazzling glories, for on our right hand is another of those picturesque effects, for which Fonthill Abbey is so justly remarkable; the view of an interior, in which, as in an excellent picture, the light and shade, the composition and the colouring, have been carefully and successfully studied. The powerful aid of association has been called in, and the united influence of this excitement of the mind and of the imagination is fully felt, as we contemplate through the curtained arch of

XXXII. *King Edward's Gallery,*

a magnificent apartment, embellished with a masterly and unsparing hand, superbly furnished, the ceiling covered with carving, and the walls nearly concealed by the ample and duplicated curtains of deep blue and scarlet.

This gallery has been designed for the purpose of commemorating the names of those individuals of Mr. Beckford's ancestry, who have been honoured with the illustrious knighthood of the garter. The number and rank of these persons, their historical and chivalrous fame, would add lustre to any genealogy.

Edward the Third, the founder of the order, and after whom this Gallery is named, occupies the place of honour, over the alabaster chimney piece, in the centre of the apartment: the portraits of six royal and most distinguished knights are placed three on each side; their arms and badges being emblazoned in stained glass on the opposite windows. In the frieze of the cornice, which surrounds the room, seventy-two gartered shields contribute to give this part of the decoration an appropriate and unusual richness.

The lofty windows to the west admit a strong influx of light, which, when the scarlet curtains are drawn, sheds a general and magical tint over every part.

In this lustre, the termination of the apartment is scarcely an object of attraction; but as we proceed, indications of the continuation of it increase, and there is soon enough perceived to hurry us forward. In a few steps we have entered

XXXIII. *The Vaulted Corridor,*

a scene, the architectural features of which are a striking contrast to all that have preceded them.

We have passed beyond the light, the gold, the marble, and the blazonry; no windows are seen. The crimsoned light which struggles through the richly latticed doors on the sides, and the glimmering of the perspective of the golden arches, are all the apparent illumination. The effect is universal and instantaneous; an involuntary silence falls upon every visitor. The most intense curiosity is only expressed in whisperings; a consciousness springs up, that we are approaching a place peculiarly pre-eminent, long before the eye, adapting itself to the gloom, discovers the golden lamp, the fretted ceiling, the candelabra, the statue, and the altar in the distance.

Two large chests, “rough with fretted gold,” mark

XXXIV. *The Sanctuary;*

we ascend its step, and pause before

XXXV. *The Oratory.*

Amidst this assemblage of all that is gorgeous, where the walls are covered with damask of the richest dye, where columns, spreading into fans, and shooting their mouldings over the vault, develop a net-work of burnished gold over our heads,—such is the enchantment which prevails, that an indescribable feeling of quietness and contentment steals upon the mind. We look back upon the gaiety and brilliancy of the scenes we have left, as a recluse does upon the glittering vanities of a world, whose pleasures he has exhausted, and from which he has withdrawn. We believe that the sublimest feelings of our nature were never before raised by such a limited quantity of space and material. It is a triumph which has never been achieved before in a less area than that of a cathedral, with all the aid of antiquity and religious association. Art only has consecrated the spot, and who will afterwards dare to dispute her divine right!

F. KING EDWARD'S GALLERY.—An inlaid table of *pietre commesse*, 9 ft. long, 4 ft. 6 in. wide, from the Borghese palace. Two carved ebony tables. Two tall carved cabinets for manuscripts. Two ebony and porcelain coffers. A very large coffer of japan, once the property of Cardinal Mazarin, and subsequently of the Duc de Bouillon. Twelve candlesticks in *or-moulu*. A mounted nautilus, engraved by Hilliken. A crystal lamp, by Valerius di Vicenza. A shell-shaped cup of crystal, from the *Garde Meuble* of the King of France. An ivory vase, carved by Strous, and mounted by Rundell and Bridge. A mounted nautilus upon an ivory plinth, carved by Benvenuto Cellini. Two caskets of gold japan, from the collection of the Duke of Mazarin; with a choice collection of other rare and curious specimens of japan.

A. KING EDWARD'S GALLERY.—The ceiling is of oak, reticulated in square panels, placed at some distance from each other, and their intervals filled with meshes of a lozenge form, with bosses at their intersections, and an heraldic emblem on each of the square panels.

An enriched cornice of oak surrounds the room; its frieze has quatre-foils separated by a short range of trefoil-headed apertures or panels; in each quatre-foil is placed an emblazoned shield, surrounded by the garter.

On the west side of the apartment are seven lofty pointed-arch windows, with massive mullions, transoms, and tracery; the lower parts filled with plate, and the upper ones with stained glass, covered with armorial decorations; opposite to six of these windows, and on the other side, are recesses for books, with armoires beneath them; opposite to the middle, and to the seventh one, is the chimney piece, of variegated marble in the gothic style; each end of the gallery is nearly occupied by the arch-ways, which open to the apartments beyond them.

Dimensions 68 ft. long, 16 ft. 10 in. wide, 17 ft. 10 in. high.

THE VAULTED CORRIDOR is arched over, with a pointed arch of an elliptical curve; the whole surface, from the apex to the floor, is divided by mouldings into oblong panels, finishing at their upper ends with trefoil heads. A range of square panels marks the springing of the arch; these are filled with quatre-foils, having an emblazoned shield in each; the whole is of oak, and the mouldings are gilt.

There are no windows, but on each side are three pointed-arch door-ways, in the manner of a confessional. The middle one is distinguished by a finial; their openings are filled with bronze lozenge lattice, each mesh inclosing a quatre-foil, and crossed by brass rods.

THE SANCTUARY is raised a step above the last; the ceiling is of oak; its mouldings and bosses are gilt, covered with a reticulation of lozenge work, each compartment filled in with a star of eight lozenges, having its centre depressed into a pendant or cul-de-lamp. The cornice is a series of circular corbels or bosses, with a fan reticulation on their surface, the meshes having trefoil heads; in the intervals of the corbels the gilt flowers of a rich frieze appear. Crimson damask covers the walls. The windows are small, but with very deep moulded mullions and tracery.

Dimensions 13 ft. long, 14 ft. wide, 16 ft. high.

THE ORATORY.—Its floor is still higher than the last; the plan is five sides of an octagon, in each angle of which rises a slender gilt column, from whose capital springs a fan work reticulation of burnished gold, spreading upward over a ground of deep crimson; the mouldings cross each other in their route, and meet in a richly gilt boss, from which the lamp is suspended. The walls of the same crimson damask as the Sanctuary. On each side is a small lancet window, divided into four compartments, and filled with brilliantly coloured stained glass of an ornamental pattern. Beneath each window is a finely carved oak bracket, having its outlines slightly touched with gold.

Dimensions 12 ft long, 14 ft. wide, 17 ft. high.

II. KING EDWARD'S GALLERY.—The Latimer cross, and the cinque-foil of Hamilton in relievo, in the panels of the ceiling, on the panels of the cabinets, and other furniture. The arms of the sovereign founder of the illustrious order of the garter, and seventy-one knights, all within the garter, are placed in the frieze of the entablature, from all of whom Mr. Beckford is lineally descended. They are arranged in the manner of the stalls, the earliest dates being placed nearest the central shield.*

RALPH NOEL, EARL OF WESTMORELAND.
SIR JOHN DEVEREUX.
WILLIAM, LORD WILLOUGHBY.
JOHN HOLLAND, DUKE OF EXETER.
JOHN, LORD NEVIL.
EDWARD, LORD SPENCER.
RICHARD FITZALAN, EARL OF ARUNDELL.
HUMPHREY BOHUN, EARL OF HEREFORD.
LIONEL PLANTAGENET, (OF ANTWERP) DUKE
OF CLARENCE.
SIR MILES STAPLETON.
HUGH COURTENAY, EARL OF DEVON.
BARTHOLOMEW, LORD BURGHERSHE.
RALPH, EARL OF STAFFORD.

HENRY, DUKE OF LANCASTER.
KING EDWARD THE THIRD.
THOMAS BEAUCHAMP, EARL OF WAR-
WICK.
ROGER MORTIMER, EARL OF MARCH.
JOHN LORD MOHUN.
THOMAS HOLLAND, EARL OF KENT.
JAMES LORD AUDLEY.
EDMUND PLANTAGENET, (OF LANGLAY)
DUKE OF YORK.
WILLIAM BOHUN, EARL OF NORTHAMP-
TON.
ROBERT UFFORD, EARL OF SUFFOLK.
REGINALD, LORD COBHAM.

* Considering the central shield on the east side as No. 1; the first on the observer's left will be No. 2; the first on his right is No. 3; the second on his left, No. 4; the second on his right, No. 5; and so on, alternately, entirely round. By this arrangement, the examination of them is exceedingly troublesome; to remove the inconvenience, we have, in the text, began with the first shield from the north on the eastern side, and proceeding southwards, have described them in the order they are actually placed, until having made the complete circuit of the apartment, we arrive at the shield with which we commenced.

THOMAS PLANTAGENET, (OF WOODSTOCK)
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.
THOMAS MOWBRAY, DUKE OF NORFOLK.
SIR PHILIP DE LA VACHE.
JOHN BEAUFORT, MARQUIS OF DORSET.
WILLIAM, LORD ROSS.
EDWARD, LORD CHERLETON.
WILLIAM PHELIP, LORD BARDOLPH.
THOMAS MONTACUTE, EARL OF SALIS-
BURY.
JOHN, LORD CLIFFORD.
HUMPHREY, EARL OF STAFFORD.
EDMUND BEAUFORT, DUKE OF SOMER-
SET.
JOHN, VISCOUNT BEAUMONT.
RICHARD WIDVILE, EARL RIVERS.
JOHN BOUCHER, LORD BERNERS.
WILLIAM, LORD HASTINGS.
HENRY PERCY, FOURTH EARL OF NOR-
THUMBERLAND.
GEORGE TALBOT, EARL OF SHREWSBURY.
HENRY PERCY, FIFTH EARL OF NOR-
THUMBERLAND.
GERALD FITZGERALD, EARL OF KILDARE.
CHARLES BRANDON, DUKE OF SUFFOLK.
THOMAS BULLEN, EARL OF WILTSHIRE
AND ORMOND.
JOHN VERE, EARL OF OXFORD.
EDWARD SEYMOUR, DUKE OF SOMERSET.

WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURGHEY.
WILLIAM STANLEY, EARL OF DERBY.
JAMES, DUKE OF HAMILTON.
WILLIAM, DUKE OF HAMILTON.
JAMES, MARQUIS OF HAMILTON.
ARTHUR, LORD GREY DE WILTON.
HENRY CAREY, LORD HUNSDON.
HENRY CLIFFORD, EARL OF NORTHUM-
BERLAND.
ROBERT RADCLYFFE, EARL OF SUSSEX.
THOMAS, LORD DACRES OF GELLESLAND.
THOMAS WEST, LORD LA WARE.
CHARLES SOMERSET, EARL OF WORCES-
TER.
GEORGE STANLEY, LORD STRANGE OF
KNOCKIN.
THOMAS HOWARD, DUKE OF NORFOLK.
JOHN HOWARD, DUKE OF NORFOLK.
WILLIAM HERBERT, EARL OF PEMBROKE.
JOHN SUTTON, LORD DUDLEY.
THOMAS, LORD HOO.
SIR JOHN GREY.
RICHARD PLANTAGENET, DUKE OF YORK.
WALTER, LORD HUNGERFORD.
HENRY, LORD FITZHUGH.
RICHARD BEAUCHAMP, EARL OF WAR-
WICK.
RICHARD VERE, EARL OF OXFORD.
JOHN, LORD LOVELL.

In the first window from the south, on the west side, are the arms and badge of

JOHN DE MONTFORT, DUKE OF BRITTANY
AND EARL OF RICHMOND.
ALPHONSUS V. KING OF SICILY AND
ARRAGON.
JOHN OF GAUNT, DUKE OF LANCASTER,
AND KING OF CASTILE AND LEON.

KING EDWARD III.
KING EDWARD IV.
KING HENRY VII.
ANNE, DUKE DE MONTMORENCI.

Opposite to these escutcheons, are the portraits of their illustrious owners.

VAULTED CORRIDOR.—On the east side is a series of nineteen shields, illustrating the descent of Mr. Beckford from King Edward I. through the house of Butler; and on the other side, a similar series, exhibiting his wife, Lady Margaret Gordon's descent, through the same family, and by an equal number of generations from that sovereign.

The first shield of Mr. Beckford's series is the northernmost one on the east side, and is that of

ENGLAND impaling Castile and Leon.
BOHUN impaling England.
ORMOND quartering Butler.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Darcy.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Welles.
BUTLER impaling O'Reilly.
BUTLER impaling O'Carrol.
BUTLER impaling Cavanah.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Fitzgerald.
ORMOND and BUTLER, and on an escutcheon
of pretence, Fitzgerald.
BUTLER impaling Mac Carthy.

ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Butler.
BUTLER impaling Poyntz.
HAMILTON and ARRAN impaling Butler.
HAMILTON and ARRAN impaling Colepepper.
HAMILTON and ARRAN, and on an escutcheon
of pretence, Reading.
HAMILTON and ARRAN, and on an escutcheon
of pretence, Coward.
BECKFORD, and on an escutcheon of pretence,
Hamilton and Arran.
BECKFORD quartering Hamilton and Arran,
and impaling Gordon.

The first shield of Lady Margaret's series is the northernmost on the west side, and is that of

ENGLAND impaling Castile and Leon.
BOHUN impaling England.
ORMOND quartering Butler.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Darcy.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Welles.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Beauchamp.
ORMOND and BUTLER impaling Hanckford.
BULLEN.
BULLEN, EARL OF WILTSHIRE AND
ORMOND, impaling Howard.
CARY.

CARY quartering Ormond, and impaling Morgan.
CARY impaling Trevanion.
WHARTON.
WHARTON, and on an escutcheon of pretence,
Goodwin.
LOCKHART impaling Wharton.
LOCKHART impaling Montgomery.
GORDON-ABOYNE impaling Lockhart.
GORDON-ABOYNE impaling Stewart.
BECKFORD impaling Gordon.

SANCTUARY.—The Latimer cross woven in the carpet. The fleurs de lis, thistles, and roses, in the carving of the chests.

ORATORY.—The fleur de lis in gold on a purple ground in the stained glass.

Sobered almost into a religious feeling, by the oratory and its concomitants, and refreshed by the repose of the scene, we recommence our route. The first new subject of astonishment, is the prodigious length of the vista before us. To reach us, the distant light of the southern oriel has to traverse the Vaulted Corridor, King Edward's Gallery, the Grand Saloon, and the Gallery of St. Michael, every receding step of which is marked by some splendid architectural feature, by some brilliant meuble, by a burst of light, a breadth of shade, or a glow of colour, in varied and almost infinite succession. It is from this point, that the mind of the spectator receives its deepest impressions of the grand conception, the successful execution, the poetic taste, and the commanding wealth of the former possessor of Fonthill.

Proceeding to the furthest door on the left, in the Vaulted Corridor, we find the staircase in

XXXVI. *The Lancaster Turret;*

and ascending as far as it permits, we enter

XXXVII. *The Upper Lancaster Room,*

an agreeable apartment, with windows to the west and north. In the centre is a billiard table, and several valuable pictures are hung around. Descending, we turn into

XXXVIII. *The Lancaster State Bed Chamber,*

a square lofty apartment, ceiled with oak, and divided into compartments. In an enriched cornice of the same material, are placed alternately a rose and a portcullis, in relievo and coloured; above the oak wainscoting the walls are



Drawn by C. F. Porden

Enriched by John Clapham.

Engraved by Robt Marshall & Son, Chiswick, near Pinner, Middx.

INTERIOR OF KING EDWARD'S GALLERY,

Looking across the Chapel into E. Richards' Gallery

Published June 1874 by Rutter, Shaftesbury

hung with crimson, on which is a number of fine pictures. The window is to the west, large and bowed; it looks out upon the plantations in front, from the Beacon on the left, to Knoyle Hill on the right, of which the view opens to the north-west, over two or three ranges of undulating ridges; on one of them, Alfred's Tower may be distinguished.

F. The furniture of this room is entirely of ebony, studded with ivory, and of fine workmanship; it is remarkable for its chaste effect, and the interesting nature of its history. The carpet has fleur-de-lis upon greyish blue ground, and is continued through all the rooms on this floor.

Ten ebony carved chairs. An ebony and marble robe cabinet. A carved ebony Persian cabinet. A silver gilt toilet service. A purple silk quilt, formerly belonging to Henry VII. An ebony state bedstead, with crimson damask hangings.

P. Portrait of the Regent Murray. *Jamieson*. — The Smokers. *Teniers*. — A Halt of Cavaliers. *Cuyp*. — Christ in the Garden. *Mantegna*.

H. The red and white rose united, and the portcullis emblazoned alternately in the frieze. The carpet strewn with fleur-de-lis (or), on a blue ground.

Through the folding doors, we enter

XXXIX. *The Lancaster Anti-Chamber,*

an imperfectly-lighted room, and very irregularly formed; it has, however, a fire place, and other conveniences. Beyond it lies

XL. *The Lancaster Gallery,*

a long vaulted room, of moderate breadth and height, hung with crimson cloth, the vault ribbed, and of oak. Four deeply recessed pointed-arch windows to the west, are opposed to as many glazed closets on the east, in which

are specimens of the porcelain of all countries ; curtains, to match the walls, draw over all the apertures ; mirrors, enamels, and pictures, decorate the upper part of the piers ; and oak tables of an antiquated pattern, bearing porcelain, stand at the feet of them.

A. Ceiling as last, but that the panels or openings are trefoil-headed.

As we approach

XLI. The Tribune Room,

the view over its balcony, and through the pierced work of its parapet, is irresistibly attractive. The elegant form of the opposite Tribune, seen across the area of the Grand Saloon ;—the rich glazed doors and studded floors of St. Michael's Gallery, highly illuminated ;—are the first traits which present themselves. To these succeed the graceful outline of one of the great arches, finely marked by the shadow within the Vestibule. As we advance, the series of triple arches appear above, and the extraordinarily situated rooms behind them, surmounted by the vaultings, which carry the Lantern, until arrived at the Tribune ; two of the superb windows burst laterally upon the scene, and overpower every other object. Here, again, the inspiration of the “genius loci” has been fully felt ; and were there no other part, the charming coup-d'œil before us must extract the acknowledgement of it from the most fastidious critic.

Retiring to the Tribune Room, we find it an apartment of very elegant form and proportions. Silk damask hangings cover the doors, the window, and the recess ; these and the covering of the walls are of crimson. Two carved corbels at the west end carry each a mirror, on which are the arms of Mr. Beckford, within the tressure of Scotland, richly emblazoned.

The ceiling is formed with moulded joists in oak, the undersides of which are gilt. The window looks up the Great Avenue, and the view is repeated by a mirror in the recess.

As we leave the Tribune Room by the door we entered, another of those perspectives, so characteristic of the place, offers itself. The scale is smaller than some we have passed, but the arrangement is very excellent.

The scene is along the Gallery, the Anti-chamber, and the State Bed Room, the marble chimney piece of which terminates the view. At the south end of the Lancaster Gallery, we turn to the right, and ascend

XLII. The Lancaster Staircase,

to a chamber in the Mervyn Tower, called

XLIII. The Duke's Bed Chamber,

a small, but cheerful room, looking down upon the scenery to the north west and north east. The ceiling is plain, almost to rudeness, in the naked joists and beams ; but the hangings of crimson cloth and watered moreen are handsome.

Descending by this same staircase, we pass the door by which we left the Lancaster Gallery ; and a little lower perceive a glazed door, which leads to the Dutchess's suite of apartments.

The first is

XLIV. The Dutchess's Bed Chamber,

a small low room, hung with scarlet cloth ; the ceiling is of oak wainscoting. This is followed by

XLV. The Dutchess's Dressing Room,

a still smaller and darker room, but with a fire place. It is wainscoted all over. We climb up a short, oblique, narrow staircase, into

XLVI. A Wider Passage,

wainscoted entirely, and gain

XLVII. The Dutchess's Bed Chamber,

a large handsome room, the prevailing colour of which is crimson.

As this room, with the Breakfast Parlour beneath it, are on the site of the intended Great Staircase, they divide between them the only window which was designed for it: this is the cause for the extraordinary position and disagreeable view (into the Kitchen Court) of the present window.

We return by the route we came to the Lancaster Staircase, and, completing the descent, we shall find it terminates in XXX. a Lobby we have previously passed. Avoiding the China Room, we cross the Vestibule of King Edward's Gallery and the Grand Saloon, to the Western Vestibule. Here, on the northern side of the Vestibule, is an archway, which opens upon

XLVIII. A Lobby,

through which we pass to reach

XLIX. The Great Staircase Tower.

In this is an ascent of winding stairs, light, commodious, and secure. Through

one of the windows, which, from its altitude, we pass as it were by instalments, are seen the arches and windows of the Saloon. A flight of one hundred and twenty-four steps lands us in

L. *The North Western Arcade,*

part of the beautiful series, which entirely surrounds the Octagon at this height. Through its apertures we find, with surprise, how much we are still beneath the Lantern ; but enjoy a favourable opportunity of inspecting its chaste proportions and tasteful arrangement in detail.

The stained glass of the windows is now more evident, and throws in a brilliant golden shade. As the eye travels down the descending lines of the architecture, it arrives at the scene we have lately left, and the features of which are perhaps now become a little familiar ; but, surveyed from this elevated point of view, they present fresh combinations, and lose none of their interest.

Turning to the right hand, the Corridor opens into

LI. *The Western Runnery;*

a lofty room, of good proportions, (hung with pictures, and a profusion of scarlet cloth curtains,) one of a suite certainly unique in situation and design. They are separated from the Great Octagon, by the Arcade only, the voids of which have no other filling up but curtains ; and their windows, situated above the great mass of the Abbey, are intercepted in their view, by the Towers which rise from it ; so that, but for their expensive hangings and furniture, we should have imagined them to be mere adjuncts, for the purpose of producing an impression of infinite extent upon a spectator below. From thence, part of their ceilings are seen, and the imagination, running off with the lengthening lines of the golden joists, spreads them over an extent, which is limited

only by the degree of perfection in which the faculty exists. In this Nunnery the walls are hung with purple damask, and scarlet curtains cover all the sides.

LII. *The South Western Arcade,*

is similar to the other, and leads us to

LIII. *The Southern Nunnery,*

similar to the last, but with no curtains. The view to the south is over the battlements of the Southern Stairs, and gives the scene, of which Wardour Castle is the centre.

A. In this is a fire place, and dwarf oak wainscoting.

This is connected by

LIV. *The South Eastern Arcade,*

with

LV. *The Eastern Nunnery,*

which, since the erection of the Eastern Wing, has no external opening. This produces an obscurity, which gives additional effect to the view into the opposite apartments and the Saloon, which, from this Nunnery, penetrates into the Great Western Hall, and, through its Portal, on to the Lawn beyond. The walls are hung with printed cloth, of a deep red pattern, upon a yellow ground.

We now go through

LVI. The North Eastern Arcade,

into

LVII. The Northern Nunnery,

remarkable for its rich oriental silk and velvet hangings, the subject from the Indian Mythology (the many-handed deity.) The view to the north opens to the westward over the Terrace, and Stourton Tower is seen in the distance.

From the west side of this, we regain the South Western Arcade, and recommencing an ascent of sixty-five steps, we pass the door of a suite of Bed Chambers, (the highest we should think in the world,) which are over the Nunneries, and arrive at

LVIII. The Platform of the Great Staircase Tower.

This commands three-fourths of the horizon from the south to the east ; in the last direction, the pinnacles and lofty towers of that part contrast most powerfully with the Grove on Hinckley Hill, and the scenery beyond it.

Entering the north-west side of

LIX. The Central Tower,

an inclined plane winds gently round between the external walls and the Lantern of the Grand Saloon, which is placed at this uncommon height. Successive flights of spacious, commodious, and well-lighted stairs, (one hundred and twenty-eight in number) take us up through the skeleton stories,

which were once intended to be the deposit of curiosities from all quarters of the world, to

LX. The Observatory,

a most acceptable and delightful resting place, of an octangular form. In the recesses, ottomans offer their welcome repose; over them and behind the curtains is a miscellaneous collection of ancient stained glass, which moderate the intense light of this elevated chamber. Between the curtains and the external windows are recesses, where the timid may view the surrounding scene without apprehension; but it may be seen quite as securely, and far more perfectly, from

LXI. The Tower Gallery,

where the rich and glorious landscape, circumscribed by no common horizon, is seen on all sides. The eye fails in the attempt to measure its extent, and telescopes are lying within to assist it. In the east, the spire of Salisbury raises its rival height; Wardour, now apparently close to us, fills the north; Dorset and Devon bound the west; and downs "immeasurably spread" cover the whole country to the north.

Our route now lies down the east descent to the base of the Tower; we stop not at the place where we entered the Great Staircase Tower, but continue descending to

LXII. The Lobby of the Great Western Hall,

which we immediately enter by a lateral door, between the grand flight of stairs and the north side of the Hall; and passing close round the bottom of the flight to the corresponding space on the other side, we descend into

LXIV. *The Western Cloister,*

a vaulted Gothic arcade, of great length, open on its side to the Western Lawn, whose area, bounded by the wooded masses on the Beacon Hill, forms a contrast to the expanse we had been contemplating above. Orange trees and other valuable plants are arranged on each side. On the left, a door opens into

LXV. *The Fountain Court,*

fitted up as a refectory, by a temporary cloister erected around it. In the centre is the fountain, a fine jet d'eau rising from an elegant octangular bason, into which it again falls, and, overflowing, descends into a very large reservoir. The cross and the cinque-foil are again used as embellishments in the shaft of the fountain.

At the south end of the Cloisters is

LXVI. *The Anti-Room.*

A small vaulted apartment, (with a fire-place) lined with fine dark oak wainscoting from the ground to the springing of the vault. The room on the west is extended into a semi-octagon, which is repeated by the mirror over the fire-place, in the sides of which are the windows at an unusual height from the floor.

F. Scarlet cloth curtains cover the windows and both ends of the room; from a boss in the vaulted ceiling is hung a massive gilt chandelier.

A. Ceiling vaulted and reduced to a square by broad reticulated arcs-boutant, at the ends; the centre groined, with larger mouldings in the angles, and a fine boss in the centre vault, jointed as stone, the recess groined and moulded;

in its centre is a shield bearing the Latimer cross. The wainscot is of the same style as the Oak Parlour.

We leave it by LXVII. **A Lobby**, leading to LXVIII. **The Cabinet Stairs**, and passing this, LXIX. **A Passage**, and LXX. **A Lobby**, we turn on the right hand into

LXXI. **The Gothic Cabinet,**

A highly ornamented and elegant little room; the ceiling covered with architectural decorations; and the walls hidden by mirrors, by plate glass, or by silk. In the embowed recess are three windows, each of one piece of plate glass; an instance in which the effect of that superb article of modern luxury is carried as far as possible.

A. The ceiling is vaulted; from the slender columns in the angles the tracery spreads over all the dome. Three of the doors have their upper panels filled with plate glass. The chimney-piece is of rosso antico. The carpet, which commences in this room, extends over the whole suite: the pattern is heraldic,—the ermined cinque-foil upon a crimson ground.

Dimensions, 15 ft. 1 in. long, 10 ft. 5 in. wide. 9 ft. 10 in. high.

LXXII. **A Lobby,**

opens upon

LXXIII. **The Terrace,**

embattled in each side, and terminated by the Great Western Hall; on the right of which proudly rises the Central Tower, buttressed by that of Latimer, with its slender turret shooting up like an oriental minaret; from this runs an embattled curtain, pierced by the windows of St. Michael's Gallery. As we

advance, we are saluted on one side by the jet d'eau, which rises from the Fountain Court ; and on the other by the breezes from the Western Lawn ; which mingle and distribute the perfumes of a profusion of flowers, arranged in vases, on each side of the whole length of the Terrace.

Refreshed, we re-enter ; and, crossing the Gothic Cabinet and its Lobbies, we are introduced to

LXXIV. *The Western Yellow Drawing Room,*

so called from the hangings of an apartment which, though open to the south and west, are yellow !—the light from whose windows, already too numerous, is repeated by mirrors in every pier, and reflected from the gold and crystal, and precious stones of a thousand articles of virtu which fill the open armoires, or cover the marbles of the room.

F. A carved ebony armoire, 8 feet high. A vase of rose crystal. Two gold tazzas, by Moiette and Auguste, 1793. A vase of a single Hungarian topaz, intended as a marriage present to Catherine Cornaro, executed by Benvenuto Cellini. An engraved silver gilt vase, of German workmanship. A jewel casket, designed by Mr. Beckford. A sceptre of jad, brought from China, by Lord Macartney, as a present from Kian Long to his late majesty. An oval cup of rock crystal, from the royal collection of France. A Greek shrine or reliquary, from St. Denys, originally brought by St. Louis from Palestine. An oriental pale sea-green China bottle, the earliest known specimen of porcelain introduced from China into Europe. An amber jewel cabinet, made for the Princess of Bavaria in 1665. A silver gilt casket, set with agates and precious stones.

A. The ceiling is covered with circles, the peripheries and intervals of which are foliated. The walls are hung with yellow silk damask. The arrangement of the parts of a room, of such importance as the one under view, are faulty : here is, too, an excess of lights coming in from different aspects. The southern windows are of a different character and design from the others in the

same room. The position of the fire-place is beneath the marble sill of a window.

Dimensions, 26 ft. 10 in. long, 18 ft. 11 in. wide, 13 ft. 8 in. high.

Most of these errors are avoided in

LXXV. *The Eastern Yellow Drawing Room,*

which we enter by a large door-way, partially closed by silk curtains, though in other respects it is entirely *en suite* with the last.

F. An inlaid ebony table. A table made of oriental alabaster. Three Persian cabinets and stands of ebony and ivory. An amber cabinet. A canteen of Chinese basket work. A gold japan canteen, from the collection of the Duc de Bouillon. An ancient enamel in three compartments.

Dimensions, 23 ft. long, 18 ft. 11 in. wide, 13 ft. 8 in. high.

Two lofty gothic doors, their panels filled with plate glass, open into

LXXVI. *St. Michael's Gallery,*

a superb apartment, vaulted throughout its amazing length, with groining of the most ingenious and elaborate design. From the sculptured corbels on each side, clusters of mouldings rise in long succession, and expanding into elegant fan-work, spread over all the ceiling; between them, descend the curtains of scarlet and deep blue, bordered with the regal tressure, partially concealing the long lines of splendid cabinets of ebony and gold, which contain within them, or bear on their marble slabs, the most precious specimens of vertu. Over a crimson carpet, strewn with myriads of white cinque-foils, the eye is led down another of the grand perspectives of the Abbey, where objects, which were lately hung over with admiration, are reduced, by their remoteness, into apparent insignificance, and all distinctness is lost in the distant Oratory. Near the fore-ground of this scene, are three of the few windows which open to

the east ; marble chimney pieces, and stained glass, decorated with heraldic achievements, and the effigies of saints and distinguished men, entirely occupy two of them ; in the upper divisions of the third are some royal escutcheons and crests brilliantly emblazoned. A fine Oriel window terminates the Gallery to the south, and presents its exquisite landscape through plate glass of magnificent dimensions. It has also some fine paintings in its upper part. Four large pointed arch windows glazed in the same style command the Fountain Court, and give light to the northern half of this Gallery. Beyond them is a very beautiful one of the lancet form, entirely filled with a mosaic pattern of great delicacy, of a similar design to the celebrated windows in the transept of York Minster. Curtains of the same style as the others, and perforated gothic doors of an unusual size, glazed with plate glass, separate the Gallery from the Grand Saloon.

In contemplating the proofs of architectural skill, and the inestimable productions of art which crowd around us in this part, we feel astonished at the genius which has created it, the judgement which has selected them, and the unlimited ability which was necessary for their acquisition. Here also in the numerous recesses of this Gallery are we again met by the same indications of a passion for the most costly and perfect productions of literature, and here, as in every other part of the Abbey, Heraldry (emblazoning other lines of descent of the late possessors) gives the last touch to the gorgeous finishing of the scene.

F. The curtains which cover all the windows and recesses are of the same kind as those in King Edward's Gallery, double and with heraldic borders. Eleven ebony tables, with slabs of marble, carrying glazed cabinets of buhl and tortoiseshell, are arranged on each side of the apartment. Chairs and tables of carved ebony are placed in and near the Oriel. Distributed in various parts of the Gallery are :—A cabinet designed by Holbein for King Henry VIII., from

the palace at Whitehall. A buhl cabinet and stand. A Persian jad vase and ewer. The Japanese idol Armida. Two Mazarine cisterns. Four silver gilt candlesticks, by Auguste. An oriental metal cup and cover. A box of gold japan, from the Duchess of Portland's collection. Two canteens of japan, from the Duc de Bouillon's collection. A cup of agate set with garnets.

A. The plan is a long parallelogram, finishing at its south end in a projecting Oriel, which has three sides of an octagon. The ceiling is distributed into nine groined compartments; the first and second, and second and third, of which (from the south) are separated by broad arcs-boutant. Each compartment has in its angle a segment of a circular groin, which rising from a corbel in the middle of a pier, expands until it meets the curves of the opposite groins. A horizontal moulding runs round at the level of the first point of coincidence, and two others between this and the springing divide the height into three parts. The reticulations are formed by dividing each quadrant perpendicularly into four, and are finished with cusped cinque-foil heads. The second circle from the springing is surmounted by a border of foliage. The vertical divisions run through their circles, and butt against their antagonists, in one of the vertices. Some of these junctions are again connected by a diagonal moulding which runs between them. Bosses of various sizes, and all sculptured, cover most of the intersections. The whole is jointed and party-coloured of a delicate stone colour. The walls above the oak wainscoting are plain buff. The wainscoting is the same as in the other gallery.

The arcs-boutant are reticulated in seven vertical divisions; the arched part divided horizontally into two tiers, with tre-foil terminations at each end.—A series of square reticulations each carrying a quatre-foil and emblazoned shield, forms an impost, beneath which cinque-foil headed reticulations descend undivided to the floor.

A narrow arc-boutant divided similarly separates the first groined compartment from the arch of the Oriel, which is also reticulated in the same manner. The ceiling of the Oriel has culs-de-lamp, &c. as the Sanctuary.

Six of the intervals on the east side and all the arcs-boutant have recesses for books; the first have moulded and kneed labels over them.

On the east side are also three windows, two of them pointed, with mullions, tracery, and filled entirely with stained glass; the upper and lower parts of which are heraldic. Between these are figures, (two in each window,) inscribed

**Sancta Etheldreda.
 Sanctus Columba.
 Venerabilis Beda.
 Rogerus Bacon.**

Round each window is a boldly carved foliage, and in its lower part a fireplace, with a chimney piece of marble.

The third window is in the centre of these, and is a transom, two lights high, and four wide, glazed with plate. In its upper part is a frieze of panels, filled with stained glass of armorial subjects—a border of carved foliage surmounts its cornice.

The south Oriel window is also a transom window, filled with panes of very large plate. It has an additional tier of tracery in its upper part, occupied by stained glass in several coats of arms, and the following figures, inscribed

**Sanctus Hieronymus.
 Sanctus Augustinus.
 Sanctus Ambrosius.
 Sanctus Athanasius.**

These subjects, and all the stained glass in this Gallery and the Oak Parlour, (except the lancet window) were executed by the late Mr. Eginton. The lancet window, the windows of the Great Octagon, the Western Hall, King Edward's Gallery, and the Oratory, are specimens of the taste and ability of the present Mr. William Raphael Eginton, his son.

Four of the windows on the west side are painted, and have mullions, transoms, and tracery similar to those in King Edward's Gallery; and like them they have plate glass in their lower parts, and armorial stained glass in their upper. The fifth is narrow and pointed; and an exquisite copy of one of the celebrated windows in the transept of York Cathedral.

The doors which lead from this Gallery into the Great Octagon, and the Yellow Drawing Rooms, are solid oak, moulded and carved, and enriched in the most elaborate style; panels of plate glass, some of them of great length, are inserted in all the upper apertures.—Two others concealed in the wainscoting lead to the Latimer Turret, and a suite of chambers on the west.

Dimensions, 112 ft. 4 in. long, 13 ft. 7 in. wide, 15 ft. 4 in. high.

Whole length of the Vista in the interior, from the Oriel in St. Michael's Gallery, to the easternmost fan of the Oratory, 307 feet.

H. Commencing the examination of the blazonry with the first shield from the north on the eastern side, we shall find on the corbels angels supporting the six following escutcheons, illustrating the descent of Mr. Beckford from the family of Seymour.

1. SEYMOUR (before the augmentation) quartering Beauchamp of Hache.
2. SEYMOUR, and quarterings as before, impaling Wentworth.
3. SEYMOUR (with the royal augmentation in the first quarter) and an escutcheon of pretence, Fillol.
4. SEYMOUR, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Walsh.
5. SEYMOUR impaling Champernowne.
6. SEYMOUR impaling Killigrew.

Proceeding southwards, in the quatre-foils of the first and second arcs-boutant, are fourteen shields, delineating the descent of Mr. Beckford from the ancient family of the Mervyns, formerly Lords of the Manor of Fonthill. They succeed in the following order.

1. MERVYN, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Squire.
2. MERVYN impalement in blank.
3. MERVYN impaling Hungerford, of Heytesbury.
4. MERVYN impaling 1. Mompesson. 2. Goodwin. 3. Drewe. 4. As 1.
5. MERVYN, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Greene quartering Latimer.
6. HALL impaling 1. Mervyn. 2. Greene. 3. Latimer. 4. As 1.
7. HALL, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Rogers quartering Besill.
8. HALL impaling Brune, quartering Rokele.
9. HALL impaling Seymour.
10. COWARD, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Hall.
11. COWARD quartering Hall, and impaling Hastings, of Hinton.
12. HAMILTON and ARRAN, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Coward quartering Hall.
- 13.* BECKFORD (without the tressure) quartering Hering, and on an escutcheon of pretence,—1. Hamilton and Arran. 2. Coward. 3. Hall. 4. As 1.
14. BECKFORD (with the tressure) quartering,—1. Hamilton and Arran. 2. Coward. 3. Hall, impaling Gordon Aboyne. 4. Seton.

On each side of the arc-boutant, which is near the Southern Oriel, is a single shield; the one on the east side contains the arms of Zouche; the other, those of Rohun quartering Britany, to commemorate the descent of Mr. Beckford from Alan la Zouche, temp. Ric. I. the grandson of Alan Viconte de Rohun, who married Constance, daughter and co-heir of Conun le Gros, Count of Britany.

* This is the shield of William Beckford, Esq. of Fonthill, Lord Mayor of London, and M.P. for that city, Maria Hamilton, his wife.

Returning northwards along the west side of the Gallery, the seven shields in the first arc-boutant illustrate the descent of Edith Latimer, whose arms occur in the fifth of the series on the east side, from William, the first Lord Latimer.

1. LATIMER, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Ledet.
2. LATIMER, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Gouis.
3. LATIMER, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Hall.
4. LATIMER impaling Peche.
5. LATIMER impaling Pipard.
6. LATIMER impaling Hody.
7. GREENE, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Latimer.

In the succeeding arc-boutant are seven shields, shewing the descent of Elizabeth Brune, whose arms occur in the eighth shield on the opposite side.

1. BRUNE quartering Rokele, and impaling De La Pole.
2. BRUNE and ROKELE impaling Radford.
3. BRUNE and ROKELE, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Sturmy.
4. BRUNE and ROKELE impaling Tichborne.
5. BRUNE and ROKELE impaling Bamfield.
6. BRUNE and ROKELE, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Martin.
7. HALL impaling Brune, quartering Rokele.

To these, succeed a series of shields on the corbels, shewing the ascending lines of Champernowne, from Elizabeth, Lady Seymour, whose arms appear in the fifth of the corbel-series opposite. The first from the south is

1. CHAMPERNOWNE impaling Bonville.
2. CHAMPERNOWNE, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Boys.
3. CHAMPERNOWNE, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Childerley.
4. CHAMPERNOWNE impaling Courtenay and Redvers.
5. CHAMPERNOWNE impaling Carew.
6. CHAMPERNOWNE impaling Norreys.

Pursuing the same object in the painted windows, we make a similar tour and begin with the northern window on the east side:—over the figures is an achievement, containing a selection of six quarterings of Mr. Beckford, viz.

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|----------|
| 1. BECKFORD. | 2. HAMILTON quartering Arran. | 3. COWARD. | 4. HALL. |
| | 5. ROGERS. | 6. BESILL. | |

Beneath, on the dexter side, are the arms, crest, helmet, mantling, and motto of

CATESBY, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Crauford.

On the sinister side are those of

CATESBY quartering Crauford, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Mountfort quartering Braundeston.

These are members of the family of Catesby, of high antiquity in Northamptonshire, who possessed Althorpe before it passed to the Spencers, and from whom Mr. Beckford is lineally descended.

The next window is generally termed the “ East Oriel,” and has in the centre of its upper part, the arms of

JAMES II. of Scotland, and of his Consort, Queen Mary of Gueldres.

On the dexter side, the arms of

JAMES I. of Scotland, and of his Consort, Joan de Beaufort.

On the sinister side,

JAMES LORD HAMILTON, and of his Consort, the Princess Mary Stuart, daughter of King James II. of Scotland, by Mary of Gueldres.

At each end of this series, is

The royal crest and motto of Scotland.

The third window is similar in its form and arrangement to the first, and in its arch has the achievement of Mr. Beckford, and the Lady Margaret Gordon, his wife, viz.

BECKFORD, impaling 1. Gordon Aboyne. 2. Gordon. 3. Badenoch. 4. Seton. 5. Fraser. 6. as 1.

In the lower part of the dexter side, are

CATESBY, quartering Crauford. Mountfort. Braundeston. and on an escutcheon of pretence, Barre.

On the sinister side,

CATESBY, with the quarterings as above, impaling Litton.

The South Oriel contains four shields of the paternal connexions of Mr. Beckford: the first from the left is

1. BECKFORD (without the tressure, and filially differenced by a mullet) impaling 1. Bertie. 2. Wilmoughby. 3. Vere. 4. as 1.
2. HOWARD and quarterings, impaling Beckford.
3. BECKFORD, quartering 1. Love of Basing. 2. Love of Goudhurst. 3. Freeland. 4. as 1, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Leigh.
4. BECKFORD impaling Pitt.

Returning northwards, the four windows on the west side have bearings, illustrating the three last generations of the Beckford family, the present representative inclusive. In the

1. BECKFORD, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Hering.

In all these windows, there are also the arms and crest of Latimer.

2. BECKFORD quartering Hering, and impaling Hamilton.
3. BECKFORD quartering Hering, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Hamilton.
4. BECKFORD quartering Hamilton and Arran, impaling Gordon-Aboyne.

The royal tressure is worked in the borders of the curtains, and the cross and cinque-foil appear repeatedly on the furniture.

We may now descend to a part of the Mansion, much less interesting than those portions already surveyed, but the magnitude and importance of which forbid it to be passed entirely unnoticed: by continuing to descend any of the Staircases, or by passing through either of the doors, in the east end of the Great Western Hall, we enter

The Basement,

or which strictly may be called the Ground Floor. Part of this has already been described under the heads of Eastern Entrance, Southern Hall, Oak Parlour, and Anti-Room, the Cloisters, and the Great Western Hall. The other parts are disposed under the two Galleries, the Octagon, and the Eastern Transept. Their general arrangement is that of a Corridor, or long passage, running all the length of each arm of the building, and connecting it

with the Sub-Octagon ; into these passages, the doors of the several apartments open.

Under King Edward's Gallery, or the northernmost branch, are placed the House-Steward and House-Keeper's Rooms, the Female-Servants' Hall and Dormitory, and beneath part of these are the Cellars.

In the Eastern Transept are, the Servants' Hall,—a large but gloomy room ; and beyond, down a range of steps and an inclined plane, to give increased height, we find the Kitchen, and its appendages. The former a spacious apartment, vaulted and groined. All the service necessary for an extensive establishment loads its numerous shelves, and covers the massive tables. Every part and every article here are directed to some useful purpose, and the only ornament admitted, is that of the skull and branching antlers of a noble stag upon the chimney-piece, whose haunches have heretofore probably smoked before the eternal fire which blazes beneath.

The Sub-Octagon, originally the Kitchen, is now a mere hall of communication ; on its north side is a larder ; on its south-east a door opens into the External Quadrangle ; to the west are entrances to the Fountain Court and the Western Hall ; and directly south is a passage running to the Eastern Postern, which has five small rooms on its side without fire places. Two other small rooms, in a passage which connects the Eastern Postern with the Anti-Room, finish the catalogue of apartments upon this floor. The Kitchen Court is left a rude excavation, having a few open vaults on the northern side.

A glance at

The unfinished Apartments,

the shell of which is executed, may be thought necessary to a complete survey of the interior. These are in the Eastern Transept. The purpose for

which the larger part of this vast interior was destined, has been mentioned. To this a chapel and library were to be added in the upper part; and it is evident, from the provision already made, that the circuit of the Nuns' Walk or Nunneries, was to be continued round the whole at the extraordinary height they now exist; a staircase of a different design, and of larger dimensions than any of the others, was also intended; but beyond this, all is uncertainty. The works, as they stand, were probably the last design of importance, which engaged the attention of the late Mr. Wyatt, previous to the fatal accident which terminated his life; and the necessity for completing them does not appear to have since pressed itself upon the consideration of the late possessor—they have therefore remained in an unfinished state.

General Observations.

In all designs for the interior of residences upon a very large scale, it always has been, and still continues to be, the practice to devote some part to the display of architectural magnificence. This generally is confined to the Entrance Hall, sometimes is carried as far as the Saloon, and often the Principal Staircase is combined with one or both of these; but, unless we add, the comfortless perspective through doors opening opposite to each other, the instances are very rare when any thing more is attempted. All the apartments beyond, though perhaps finely proportioned, and judiciously decorated, are generally so injured by the colossal dimensions, costly materials, and elaborate ornament of the approaches, as to have an air of diminutiveness, poverty, and neglect. This is a great defect of judgement,—an anti-climax which ought to be banished, but whose universality is so complete, that probably Fonthill Abbey is the only exception existing. In this building, with what sacrifice of domestic comfort we shall afterwards inquire, the late possessor has devoted the whole, except the

offices in the basement, and a few attics, to the splendid purpose of producing a succession of architectural scenes of infinite variety. In selecting the design of an Abbey, and what appears to be the most sacred part of an Abbey, for a residence ;—in placing in close neighbourhood styles of more than one age and country ; and in the violation of many of the little common-place rules of supposed propriety ; the late possessor and his architect will no doubt be thought amenable to censure by some persons : but how few will they be, compared to the thousands who have poured out their tribute of admiration, and even astonishment, at the novelty, beauty, and grandeur of the effects, which have been created by this bold departure from the common road.

In one or two royal palaces in the world, there may be single scenes of greater extent and grandeur, than any one at Fonthill Abbey ; but among them all, has Invention yet produced any thing to be compared with the Grand Saloon, its four-fold vistas, its purple light, and superb altitude !

If the long deep-blue curtains, which fell and concealed the terminations of the Vestibules, were restored,—if the recesses which contain the windows were furnished with similar draperies, and if the Tribune were re-opened into the Chintz Boudoir, what still more extraordinary emotions would agitate a spectator entering from the Western Lawn, by the judicious exposure of part, or the whole, of the scene and effects with which he would be surrounded !*

Where too, it may be asked, is there a scene created by art, more affectingly solemn than the Oratory, more stately than the Western Hall, or more beautiful than the South Oriel !

It is almost disgusting, and in fact, impossible with patience, to pass from these to the minutiae of criticism, and that too, when all the great objects for

* By this means too the single blemish of the Saloon,—the colourless window, might be concealed, except when it becomes the only aperture for the rays of a setting sun, which then displays its tortuous line of steps in a very singular manner.

which the fabric was intended, have been so successfully attained and so universally acknowledged.

We shall therefore limit ourselves to some observations on the style or styles in which the Abbey is built, and to a short statement of the domestic accommodations which it affords. If the Abbey were a fair specimen of the total of the requisites for domestic comfort, which could be obtained with such a display of magnificence, we should certainly have the prejudices of all our countrymen in hostile array, when they know the scanty means it possesses. Unseduced by its splendour, they would demand warm sitting rooms and airy chambers, and we should be alarmed at the brief list we could offer ; but as we hold a very different opinion ; as we are convinced that comfort and magnificence are not incompatible ; and as we have reason to believe that what is, is what was intended, and know that more might have been obtained if more had been thought desirable ; we are bound to consider the present domestic conveniences of the Abbey well adapted to the particular establishment for which they were provided.

Until very recently, the Oak Parlour was the only room for the service of dinner, with the important recommendation of being the furthest apartment from the kitchen ! Over this Parlour, are the two Yellow With-Drawing Rooms, communicating with the Gothic Cabinet and St. Michael's Gallery, and these form the only regular suite of apartments even now : the Great Dining and the Crimson Drawing Rooms, with the Crimson Breakfast Parlour, have been temporarily and lately fitted up for some particular necessity.

All the Abbey, with all its Towers, furnishes but about eighteen bed-rooms, thirteen of which, from their almost inaccessible height, their smallness, their want of light and ventilation, from one or all these causes combined, are scarcely fit for their intended use ; and of the other five, not one has a dressing room. The defects of the Basement in regard to the offices, must have been evident

from the sketch we gave of its contents. There are no means of baking, washing, or brewing within it, and these operations are therefore performed in a temporary out-house. The facility with which most of these omissions could have been supplied, proves that they were but slightly, if at all, felt ; and we should have abstained from noticing them, if we had not known the curiosity which has prevailed about these parts of the Abbey.

The perpetual change of style in the architectural composition of every principal part of Fonthill Abbey, has been generally visited with condemnation by those, whose information has placed them on a little higher elevation in the ranks of science than the great majority who have visited it ; but in proportion as we reach those whose acquirements give them justly a place among the foremost, we find these animadversions die away into “thin air,” and an acknowledgement prevail, that the Abbey can be judged of by no common rules.

Its irregularities may be justified in kind, if not in degree, by the example of all previously existing buildings of the class, of which it is professedly an imitation. The additions of successive ages in their own characteristic styles are to be found in all of them ; and to those who look for authority in these things, there is ample authority to offer them for the spirit, if not for the letter, of all that has been done at Fonthill. It is true, there is no sickly affectation of fidelity *for admeasurement*,—no clinging to any particular model, that strong hold of all smattering in the profession. The Abbey is no *Frankenstein*, built up of the actual head of one individual, the arms of another, and the body of a third, forming a disgusting and unnatural whole. There is a tower ; but it is not the tower, *faithfully copied*, of Canterbury, nor of Gloucester, nor of any tower extant. Its interior is in the ecclesiastical manner, as decidedly as that of any Abbey existing ; but where is its exact prototype ? Confessionals, and Sanctuaries, and Oratories, have been raised over all Christendom ; but when before did genius so temper the light, and conduct the perspective ? when did taste so

spread the decorations with such inimitable effect! St. Anthony might have had lodgings of larger dimensions at Padua, but he was certainly “enshrined” at Fonthill.

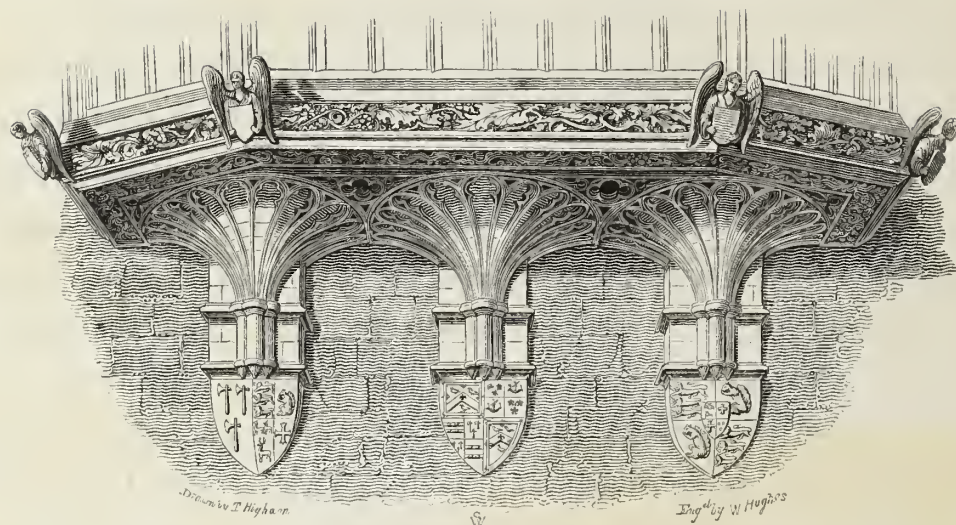
Among other reasons why the discrepancy of styles is really so little felt by all, and so gently censured by the best judges, is the fact, that each division is of itself large enough to fill the eye and the mind of the spectator; and that where discordant styles occur in the same view, that in the foreground is generally so decided and overpowering, as to throw the distant and subordinate one out of immediate consideration, so far as a change of style is concerned.

These departures from the rigid rules of the art, so evident throughout the whole of Fonthill Abbey, have been, and will be, fatal to those who presume to exercise the profession of an architect, without genius and a matured judgement; but when this rare union does exist, and they are employed upon a work deserving their attention, how delightful it is to watch their god-like creations, to see the spirit and the characteristics of a style never for a moment neglected, and its subtle essence always preserved, without the nauseating repetition of its models and its mannerism.

THE ORATORY LAMP.



CORBEL OF THE SOUTH ORIEL WINDOW.



CHAPTER III.

The Exterior.

BEFORE we proceed to a consideration of the general forms of the exterior of Fonthill Abbey, and examine its pretensions to the character of a grand architectural composition, which can be done only with propriety after the contemplation of it at some distance ; we propose to make a nearer survey of it, so that, by the acquisition of an accurate knowledge of the names, designations, relations, and positions of the several parts, the discussion of its merits or demerits as a whole may be at least intelligible, and exempt from any great error.

FONTHILL ABBEY.



VIEW OF THE WEST, & NORTH FRONTS

Descending from the Western Hall upon the Lawn, and turning to the right towards the opening of an avenue, called the Clerk's Walk, we obtain a view of the principal parts of the building which face the west and north. The grouping of the great divisions of the Abbey is very perfect from this point. The enormous height of the central tower is reduced into proportion by the lofty erections about its base, and a magnificent idea of extent is produced by the great distance at which the towers appear, which terminate the eastern and southern extremities.

The little polygonal building on the left, at the end of the northern arm, contains the Oratory. The light of the three lancet-shaped windows, and of the broad one in the lower part of the Lancaster Tower, is divided between the Sanctuary and Vaulted Corridor ; the incongruities of the external and internal elevations being concealed by the judicious use of a screen, which stands at some distance within the walls, and forms the sides of these apartments.

Beyond these windows is the series which belongs to King Edward's Gallery, the last of which is in the base of the Mervyn Tower ; over this is the window of the Tribune Room ; and returning northwards are the dormers of the Lancaster Gallery. Nearer in the Lancaster Tower, is the Oriel of the Lancaster State Bed Chamber, surmounted by an embattled cornice, and decorated beneath with armorial bearings in quatre-foils inserted in square panels. Over it is the window of the Billiard Room. In the upper part of the Mervyn Tower, is the Duke's Chamber, which has a projecting window to the north ; and above it are some small rooms.

The loop-hole apertures in the Basement are the principal, but far from adequate services of light to the offices.

Adjoining the Mervyn Tower, is seen one of the short arms of the Grand Octagon, which contains the Vestibule to King Edward's Gallery, the Northern Nunnery and the Chamber over it, the windows of which may be

seen over the Mervyn Tower. Two-thirds of the buttresses at the angles of this arm are now built into this tower, but their upper parts rise above and terminate in pinnacles, having a pediment or gable with a perforated and embattled parapet. Between this and the Western Arm, which is pinnacled and gabled in the same manner, shoots up direct from the ground the tall cylindrical form of the Great Staircase Tower, crowned with a parapet of similar richness, but at a greater height; the galleries, which lead from it, at the level of the Nunneries, are not in fact communications to those apartments, but conveniences of another kind.

Directly over, rises the Central Tower in five successive stories. The plan, like the Saloon beneath it, is octangular, angle-buttressed. The first story, or that against which the Vestibule roofs butt, is without any thing but two small perforations in each side, but its buttresses are remarkable, having an angle in the middle of their front, like the cut-water on the pier of a bridge; but this, when the plan of the buttress changes, as it does in the next division, gives room for the foot of a pedestal.

Each side of the second story has a tall pointed arch window with mullions and tracery. By their means, the matted and painted glass of the internal lantern is illuminated; over each of them are two loop-holes. The lower part of each buttress is formed into a tabernacle, gabled, with a niche in each, having a pedestal but no statue; above, the buttresses run square up through the superior cumbent stories, where they also are gabled and pinnacled.

The third story is reticulated upon its surface by mouldings dividing each cant perpendicularly into five compartments, having cinque-foil heads. In the second and fourth of each is a window, with also a cinque-foil head, and surmounted by crockets and a finial.

The fourth story is divided similarly to the one beneath it; but all the compartments, except on the east side, open to a Gallery, formed between the Star-

Chamber and the external walls. It is surmounted by an embattled and perforated parapet, above which ascend the tapering forms of the pinnacles, decorated with crockets and finials, and bound together by a cradling of iron.

Advancing westward, from the base of the Great Tower, is the Grand Entrance Hall. The square projection, in the middle of the northern part, contains the recess in which the statue of Alderman Beckford is placed. It has a small staircase within it, to which access may be had by a little external door on the eastern side. All the windows on this side, except two very small ones near the round tower, are blanks; and the larger ones are entirely without mullions or tracery.

The western end is occupied entirely by the Principal Entrance, to which there is a short flight of steps; over it is a very small window. The angles are buttressed, and the roof terminates in a gable, up the sloping lines of which is the same solid embattled parapet, which runs along the sides. The buttresses finish with pinnacles, and on the apex of the pediments stands a tabernacle gabled, and surmounted by a cross-fleury; in the front is a decorated polygonal niche with a projecting base, on which stands a statue of St. Anthony preaching, his right arm raised and extended, with the palm of his hand bending over his auditory; his left-hand exposes a cross to their attention. The saint is bare-headed, and his waist is girded with a knotted rope, the long cords of which reach nearly to his feet.

Beyond the further buttress of this front, is seen the group of the Southern Towers; and directly eastward of the Great Tower, and over King Edward's Gallery, the body of the Eastern Transept, and the gigantic pinnacles and octagonal towers of its angles.

Traversing the Lawn in a southerly direction, if we halt immediately in front of the Western Entrance, the Abbey, perhaps, assumes its stateliest form; but from the parallelism of its lines, the absence of perspective and picturesque

effect, it has too much the air of a geometrical elevation to interest long. We proceed therefore to a point sufficiently advanced to command the southern parts of the edifice. The Lancaster Tower, the Sanctuary, and the Oratory, now form the distant group. The Western Hall and the Central Tower appear in similar combination, but we see the lofty windows of the former; and at the termination of the façade in which they stand, is one of the noble painted windows, which throw their luxurious light over the Octagon. The appearance of a window above is a blank.

In a position corresponding to that of the Mervyn Tower, stands, on this side, the Latimer Tower, and its Turret. Against it terminates the roof of the Vaulted Library; and beneath it may be seen the windows which mark the commencement of St. Michael's Gallery.

From about the centre of the southern flank of the Western Hall is an arcade, called the Western Cloisters, on the top of which is the Terrace. This arcade encloses the Fountain Court, and connects the Hall with the Anti-Room in the base of an octangular tower. The first and last openings of this Arcade are glazed windows, with mullions and tracery, not descending to the ground, but having their sills five or six feet above it. The others are all open or only occasionally closed. In the octangular tower last mentioned, and over the Anti-Room, are the windows of the Gothic Cabinet; above, is one which opens from the Cedar Boudoir. At this level running southwards, may be seen the window of the Western Corridor in the centre of two others, which are blanks. This leads to the other octangular tower, called the Nelson Turret, which contains the staircase of this part of the building. Between these towers is a polygonal projection, the upper part of which belongs to the Western Yellow Drawing Room, and the lower to the Oak Parlour.

Turning a little to the east, we command a more complete view of the extreme southern front, which now forms a fore-ground to the central tower, and

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VIEW OF THE SOUTH FRONT

James H. Carter

the accumulation of gables and pinnacles round its base, from which go off in opposite directions, and strongly contrasted, the Western Hall and the Eastern Transept.

The tower which now balances in the composition, that of Nelson's Turret, is quite of another character, square, buttressed, and loftier. It contains the entrance to the Southern Hall, the Oriel at the end of St. Michael's Gallery, the Gallery Cabinet, or the chamber of Mr. Beckford, and two other small ones over it. The lower part or soffite of the Oriel is exquisitely finished. From a cluster of dwarf shafts on three corbels bearing armorial shields, spring three circular groins, covered with cinque-foil headed reticulations ; a margin of foliage encompasses them ; and the intervals between it and the circular forms are filled with quatre-foils and tre-foils. An enriched cornice surmounts the whole, having an angel carrying a shield at each angle. Upon this cornice stands the parapet of the Oriel decorated with tall cinque-foil headed reticulations ; each angle has a light buttress running up and finishing with a pinnacle ; between them is another parapet, pierced and embattled. In the interval between Nelson's Turret and the square tower, are three lines of battlements, each retiring as it rises above that which is before it. The highest and farthest line is the curtain, which contains the communication with the square tower, and also that of the Eastern Postern Tower, which is seen with its accompanying minaret beyond it. The second or middle line of battlements is on the façade of the Yellow Drawing Rooms, whose southern windows open from it upon the Balcony, which is defended by the third or lowest line. This stands upon a cornice, richly decorated with crests, masks, &c. surmounting the Arcade, and is of an elaborate design. The openings of the Arcade are of the pointed form, their outlines beautiful ; their archivolts are carried by busts, and on each pier is a buttress of elegant proportions, finishing before it reaches the cornice. Opposite to each arch is one of the windows of the Oak Parlour, whose rich

tracery may on this side be appreciated ; reticulated arcs-boutant cover each pier, and the intervals are groined, having mouldings springing from angle columns, and spreading over the vault, in the most graceful manner. On the centre intersection is an armorial decoration in alto-relievo ; the others have carved bosses.

Continuing towards the east, and proceeding with our survey from the South East Tower, we find on its eastern side, one of the small painted windows of St. Michael's Gallery, having a slight projection, and a cornice embattled and decorated with masks, animals, chimeras, &c. Its correspondent one is a little farther onwards in the Eastern Postern Tower, so called from the Entrance which is beneath this window ; over it is the Anti-Chamber of the Vaulted Library, which fills the roof north of the Tower ; and above the Anti-Chamber are two small bed-rooms. Between the square towers appears the East Oriel of the Gallery. Its upper and lower parts are filled with armorial insignia. Over it is the little window of the Eastern Corridor. A plain wall embattled fills up the large space between the Eastern Postern and the Latimer Towers, having near its base a line of square-headed windows, belonging to the offices of this part. The Oriel in the Latimer Tower is that of the Chintz Boudoir, and the apertures above light two small chambers. Still higher may be seen the Southern Nunnery, and the circular window of the bed-room over it. We now come to the base of the Central Tower, which, with its superstructure, may here be seen from the ground to its "topmost height." The door at the bottom opens into the Sub-Octagon ; the window over is another of the great coloured ones. Above it is a blank. The Central Tower has been before described, and presents no new appearance from this view, except that we may see the manner in which the perforated battlement is carried round, over and between the Vestibules of the Octagon.

To the Eastern Vestibule is attached the Eastern Transept, a lofty building

of three stories. The principal one has three pointed windows of great height, with mullions, transoms, and tracery ; the lower parts of which form those of the Great Dining Room, the Crimson and the Grand Drawing Rooms. Beneath are the loop-holes of the Basement ; above is a beautiful Arcade intended to open into the Corridor, or future extension of the Nuns' Walk. The principal mouldings of its piers, and similar ones from the apex of each arch, run up to a great height, and finish in the cornice ; thus dividing the surface into a number of tall panels, in each of which is a loop-hole. Upon a double plinth above the cornice stands an embattlement of the same style, and at the same level as those over the Vestibules.

The angles of this Transept, which are nearest the Central Tower, are finished with octagonal turrets of small diameter, containing staircases. At the height of the Arcade, each cant has two tiers of a single panel, cinque-foiled at both ends. Above the cornice, the cant finishes as a tabernacle, with a gable and niche, and their combination makes a base for a large plain octangular pinnacle, with a carved finial. The angular towers of the other end are of larger diameter and height. In the lower part of the south-east one, is the Octagon Cabinet. The shafts of these towers are plain, or only perforated with lancet-form openings, up to the sill of the Arcade, between which and their cornice they have four tiers, or stories, highly ornamented. The first or lowermost is of equal height with the Arcade, and the panelling over it. The cants here alternate in design, the principal ones having the general arrangement of the Arcade,—a pointed arch, panels, and loop-holes over ; and the others two tiers high, and two wide, of reticulated work with cinque-foil terminations. The arches have a column in their middle, and others on their piers ; their heads have tracery, and on their archivolts lie crockets, which meet upwards in a finial.

The next tier, which ranges with the parapet, has upon each face, except

the one adjoining the south part, a square panel, in which is a lozenge, enclosing a quatre-foil, whose centre is filled with a sculptured escutcheon.

Each cant of the third tier resembles a window, with a mullion transom, and head tracery of a remarkable style. The mullion spreads, so as to form a lozenge, other mouldings from the piers entering its sides and crossing in the centre. The apertures are all foliated, and when they are over the windows beneath, perforated.

Over these is a kind of frieze formed by two square panels on each face, in which are quatre-foils and shields.

The cornice has a bold projection; on its angles are grotesque masks, and between them square flowers. The whole is surmounted by the same plinth and pierced embattlement as the façade below.

The east end of this Transept is composed of the two terminal towers, connected by a curtain, with parapet, arcade, &c. in the upper part; and a plain wall beneath, having nothing but a few loop-holes into the passages.

The north side of the Eastern Transept differs from the south one in nothing above the sill of the Arcade: below this the windows are large, but very inferior to their opposite ones, and there are buttresses between them. Near the ground a range of low-pointed broad windows gives light to the Kitchen Passage. In the middle of this front, is the projection which was intended to receive the staircase. Its upper part is a bed-room, under it is the Duchess's Chamber, and beneath that the Crimson Breakfast Parlour. The door in the Basement leads into an unfinished Entrance.

In the angle of the Kitchen Court is the Larder, and over it the Porcelain Room; above are the Duchess's Anti-Chamber and Dressing Room; and still higher, the third painted window of the Great Octagon.

The buildings on the west-side of the Kitchen Court have been already described.

It is impossible not to remark, and unjust not to mention, the taste and execution of all the moulded and carved parts of the exterior. The heraldic ornaments, and the figures which accompany them, are remarkably good ; and the following characteristic busts, which are on the South Arcade, are modelled with extraordinary ability and feeling. They are contrasted with each other by their juxtaposition, so as to produce the highest possible effect.

On the first pier from the left are

1. SORROW ; an interesting Female, her hair lank, her hands clasped, and a look expressive of the severest mental anguish.
2. MIRTH ; the head of a young Man, modelled from the " Jest, and youthful Jollity" of Milton's *L'Allegro*.

On the second pier are

3. EQUANIMITY ; a Female, mild, complacent, with a smile slightly contemptuous, turning from, but pointing at
4. REVENGE, grasping the hilt of his dagger, and rushing forward in violent agitation.

On the third pier are

5. MELANCHOLY ; her cheek resting on her hand, her hair dishevelled : she has a look of deep abstraction, of one who is conscious of nought, save " Of Joys departed never to return."
6. DEVOTION ; a graceful Magdalen, veiled, her head bending forward, and her looks fixed on the ground. In her hand she clasps a cross, the beloved emblem of all her hopes.

On the fourth pier are

7. YOUTH ; richly dressed, with a chalice in his hand, regarding earnestly
8. EXPERIENCE ; a man somewhat advanced in years, and crowned, his countenance severe, but without austerity. He appears, from the action of his left hand, to be in the act of teaching.

These are in cement, but no symptom of dilapidation yet appears, and we hope will not. The statue of St. Anthony in the western front is of stone, of great merit, and was carved by Theakston.

The display of Heraldry, so remarkable in the interior, has not been forgotten externally ; the arms not emblazoned, but in alto relievo.

In the lower part of the windows of the Lancaster State Bed-Room, are the bearings of

MARTIN of Athelhampton.
HALL of Bradford.

BRUNE quartering Rokele and
MARTIN repeated.

The cross-fleury of the House of Latimer is placed over the statue of St. Anthony.

In the cornice of the South Arcade, over the buttresses, are the crests and mottos of Mervyn, Beckford, Hamilton, and Latimer, and over the middle arch is the portcullis. In the centre vault of the Arcade, is the additional crest assigned under the Earl Marshal of England's authority to Mr. Beckford, in commemoration of his descent from a co-heir of the Abercorn branch of the Hamilton Family, and in allusion to his descent (through the ancient family of Mervyn, Lords of the Manor of Fonthill Gifford) from William, the first Lord Latimer.

The centre shield beneath the South Oriel is that of Beckford quartering Hamilton and Arran, Hall, and Coward; the shield to the west is that of Hall impaling Mervyn, Squire, Green, and Latimer; the one on the other side has Mervyn quartering Squire, and on an escutcheon of pretence, Green and Latimer.

The two angels beneath the East Oriel each support a shield; left one charged with the arms of Beckford, and the other with those of Gordon-Aboyne. On a label beneath, is the motto "**De Dieu tout.**" Above these are six shields, bearing alternately the arms of Mervyn and Latimer. In the panels of the upper part of the window, the crest and mottos of Mervyn, Beckford, Hamilton, and Latimer are repeated. The portcullis appears again in the cornice of the window over the Eastern Postern.

In the larger octagonal towers of the Eastern Transept, the Latimer cross occurs on a shield in every face.

After this survey of the parts and their details, we may venture upon taking a wider range, and surveying the whole from more remote points, without danger of that confusion which is produced when the numerous towers, and turrets, and pinnacles become intermixed and blended together, by the combined effects of situation, distance, and atmosphere.

Among the numberless combinations which the buildings of the Abbey are capable of producing, there are five points of view in the grounds, which include all, or nearly all of their peculiarities. The first is from the bottom of the fir grove near the Barrier Gate. 2. From a seat on the south side of the Bitham Lake. 3. From a point near the western extremity of the Beacon Terrace. 4. From the Stone-Gate at the end of the Great Western Avenue. 5. From the second mile-post on the Terrace.

In the first, the advantageous height of the Eastern Transept is fully felt. It has destroyed that insulated and precipitous character which the tower had in this view before its erection, something of which still remains on the other side. From no point is the graceful and pleasing effect of the elegant terminal towers more felt than from this. They ambitiously shoot up at some distance from their great rival; but, finishing just where they ought, they create a judicious contrast, giving dimension and dignity to the central tower; introducing a gradation of height, which arrests the eye in its otherwise rapid and abrupt descent from its skyward pinnacles. The southern group of towers wants elevation and apparent connexion with the other buildings.

The view over the Bitham Lake would have but little to recommend it, if the architecture only were to be considered; but as a combination of wood, water, irregularity of surface, and enormous altitude in building, it is a most extraordinary scene.

But it is from the upper end of a slope, which, entering the Beacon Terrace obliquely, commands the west and south fronts of the Abbey, that the most

picturesque view of the edifice, as a whole, is obtained. The great masses from this point, under favourable circumstances of light, have a sufficiently intelligible outline, notwithstanding the excessive intricacy of the detail. Their position and direction are understood, even at this distance and height, where the laws of perspective have no more visible influence, than they appear to have on the architecture in a landscape of Gaspar Poussin; yet, though the general effect is magnificent, the composition as a work of art is exceedingly faulty. A want of balance, harmony, and keeping in the great masses; no breadth of chiaro-oscuro, no repose, but a uniform sparkling of light from the number of facettes into which the surface is cut. Though the building of the Eastern Transept is a splendid addition, and has done much in destroying the immensely disproportionate height of the central tower, it has crushed every other part; none of the other towers can struggle up to the height of its curtain. Seen, as in this view, with its grand façade as their back ground, they are reduced to models—things that a child might cry for. The great elevation of the Western Door-way has also a similar effect. How it reduces to mouse-trap dimensions, the apertures of the Cloisters, of the Arcade, and indeed every other, except the windows of the Hall and Octagon! We say it with reluctance, and with diffidence, but to us it appears that disproportion prevails in every part of the exterior. The beauty of contour is entirely absent; from no point can an agreeable sky-line be formed; there is no continuity, no succession, no gradation; all the lines are interrupted, dissimilar, abrupt, and rectangular. Still we repeat, that such is the magnitude of dimension, infinity of detail, and novelty in the original idea, that as a whole, the Abbey cannot be contemplated without emotions that have never been excited by any building erected by any private individual in our times.

There is an air of great stateliness about the Abbey, in the view down the Grand Avenue from the Stone-Gate, and it is finely backed by the wood on

Hinckley Hill ; but, except in the morning, (the most favourable time for this view,) it is nearly one sheet of light. It resembles the chalk cliffs near Margate, with the North Foreland Light-house looking over them. There is something also very formal and ostentatious in the manner in which it is placed across the end of the Avenue. This may, perhaps, be mitigated, when the plantations are high enough to shut out the extremities ; but now every stone is displayed in the long lines from north to south, from the lawn to the “ sky-kissing ” pinnacles.

The view from the second mile-post on the Terrace is by far the simplest, and is perhaps the grandest of all the others. Rising from amidst a wood which covers the Hill on which the Abbey stands, and which conceals every part below the level of the cross over the Western Entrance, the Central Tower, the curtain and the towers of the East Transept are all that is visible. The cross plainly intimates that there are other parts, but to make them out, is the work of the imagination. As this is the north side of the edifice, it generally is in shadow, and thereby acquires that breadth and mass, which are such strangers in every other aspect.

Returning to the Abbey, we shall conclude with a few remarks, which would have interrupted the descriptive tour we made around it. Some parts of the Abbey, it is admitted, are additions ; several of them made many years after the completion of the first design ; but in the junction of these to the original, some care in the adaptation would have been expected, particularly when no very discordant style was adopted in the new works. But this attention rarely occurs ; the subsequent increase is jammed against the other, in accidental and monstrous conjunction. Instances of this occur in the addition of King Edward's Gallery to the North Vestibule ; in the junction of the Latimer Tower to the South Vestibule, &c. But even in parts of the original design, something like the same absence of fitness occurs. The Western Hall was a distinguished feature from the very first ; still it is made to look like an undigested addi-

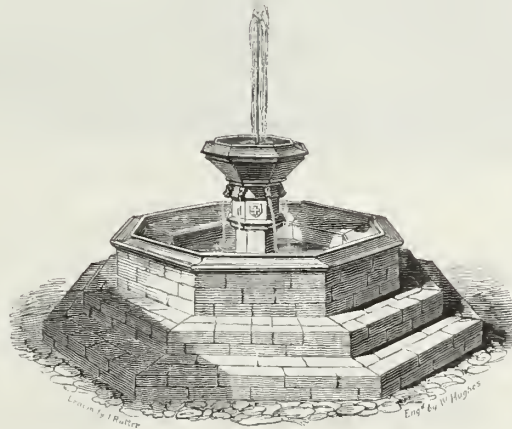
tion, enclosing the West Vestibule, which pushes up through its roof; and it is so much too wide, that if its south side were carried on and not deflected to avoid the worst consequences of the blunder, it would enter one of the great painted windows of the Octagon, &c.

In the buttresses generally, and in some of the other projections, there appears to be a want of greatness of manner. The taller buttresses are attenuated into feebleness. Those on the southern square tower are, however, exceptions to the remark; but why, we may ask, are these characteristic and appropriate appendages entirely omitted on the great south façade; when the introduction of them upon the broad piers seems absolutely required, and where they would have diminished the disproportion, which now exists between the extremely plain surface of the principal story, and the profusion of mouldings which covers the one above.

But we forbear dwelling longer on this part of our subject, and would hurry from the defects, which more or less attend all human achievements, to the excellences which may also be found distributed over the building. What a delightful bit of architectural composition is the South Arcade! how beautiful its contours! how exquisite its embellishments! The same feeling and spirit pervade every part of the detail beneath the two Great Oriels of St. Michael's Gallery. Again, can any one be insensible to the fine proportions of the Great Western Door-way, a little overlaid, perhaps, by the crockets and finial, but in every other respect perfect? There is also another scene, which can be but imperfectly attained on account of the plantations, and that is a direct view of the end of the Eastern Transept, in which the Central Tower rises grandly between, and above the two others.

Fortunately for the lovers of architecture, the Abbey is not finished; and in its completion, which, it is said, is probable, from the ample means of the present possessor, and his attachment to the art, all, or nearly so, of the

trifling defects apparent in the detail of this superb edifice, may be removed or thrown into shade by a close adherence to the original design; and we will venture to assert, that if the architect, under whose superintendence the important task of continuing the work may fall, should be happy enough to catch but one spark of that brilliant and excursive genius which created the design, and guided the progress of Fonthill Abbey to its present state, he will be enabled, with the magnificent idea before him, to produce an edifice unparalleled in the domestic architecture of this country, and not to be surpassed by that of any other.



THE MARBLE FOUNTAIN AND BASIN.

A VIEW OF THE SCENERY OF THE AMERICAN PLANTATIONS.



CHAPTER IV.

Walk within the Barrier.

BEFORE we commence our task of delineating the grounds of Fonthill—before we attempt to recall those remembrances of delight, with which many have wandered in these

“ Walks and alleys wide
“ With footing worn and leading inward far;”*

* Spenser.

or, with a higher aim, endeavour to convey to those who have never beheld these recently impervious shades, a just idea of their serene and solitary beauty ; we must at once premise that we almost despair of producing any very distinct impressions upon the mind of the reader. The ornamented grounds of Fonthill, though unequalled in extent, contain very few objects that will admit of individual description. The great principle upon which this labyrinth of groves has been constructed, is that of exhibiting an union of the wildest and the most ornamented scenery,—the picturesque and the beautiful, in close society. The utmost profusion of expense has been bestowed, not to amaze the senses by some rich and magical effect of art, but to keep the mind in a perpetual enjoyment of the most striking beauties, and richest decorations of nature ; they go far to realize the description of the gardens of Armida ;

“ Faire trees, high plants, strange herbes and flowrets new,
 “ Sunshinie hills, dales hid from Phœbus’ raies ;
 “ Groves, arbours, mossie caves, at once they view,
 “ And that which beautie most, most wonder brought,
 “ No where appear’d the arte which all this wroughte.”

“ So with the rude, the polisht mingled was
 “ That natural seemed all and every parte ;
 “ Nature would crafte in counterfeiting pas,
 “ And imitate her imitator, Arte.”*

The walks of Fonthill are ever reminding us of the ordinary features of woodland landscape, but we as constantly feel the presence of the creative power of unbounded means and exquisite taste, in rendering these woods what poetry might depict of the woods of Arcadia ; where the kindest soil and the most genial climate should strew the earth with every sweet, and a garden should bloom in every wilderness. The luxuriant imagination of Milton has

* Fairfax’s Tasso.

painted a part of that scene, which has been almost realized, under the greatest natural disadvantages, by the enterprising spirit of unlimited wealth ; and his description of Eden may have had some influence, in determining the style in which the extensive Domain of Fonthill has been embellished.

“ Flowers, worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
“ In beds and curious knots, but Nature’s boon
“ Pour’d forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
“ Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
“ The open field, and where the unpierc’d shade
“ Embrown’d the noon-tide bowers.”*

The grounds of Fonthill exhibit the true spirit of English gardening, carried to its utmost extent of a bold and varied simplicity. Every tree, every shrub, and every flower, has contributed to the production of one unequalled effect of wild profusion. The woodbine and the jasmine not only interlace the thickets with their green and fragrant tendrils, but the rose and rhododendron bloom beneath the larch and the hawthorn, and the furze and the lily blossom in equal companionship. These appearances are occasionally presented in the secluded spots, which the rambling feet of the stranger light upon ; but they are not confined to particularly favorable situations. The union of the garden and the grove is almost universal ; and it is impossible to imagine a more charming feature of the place, or one which more clearly indicates the care with which its scenery has been created, and almost matured, by one tasteful possessor.

The walk within the Barrier, to which these characteristics must be principally confined, may be pursued with the most complete gratification on a serene and brilliant afternoon. There are abundant coverts to protect the rambler from the influence of the sun ; and the effects of light and shade, which are

* Paradise Lost.

at that time produced, give the utmost possible richness and grace to the broad masses of hanging wood, and the occasional bursts of the distant landscape. Leaving then the fascinations of the Abbey, we cross the southern Lawn: the scene before us is one of unrivalled beauty. The Lawn is skirted by plantations of oak, fir, and hawthorn; the waters of the Bitham Lake bring down the soft and sparkling light of the sky into the heart of the universal green: the middle distance is clothed with wood; and the terrace of Wardour Castle rises proudly on the line of the horizon. Quitting the Lawn, we enter a path, whose course lies beneath a mound or rude slope of furze; the Abbey towers soar above, half-veiled in foliage; and beneath is a broad mass of pine wood. We avoid the turn to the left, and crossing the carriage road, enter the lower terrace. When we first visited this charming path, it was almost unknown, and we delighted to wander

“ O’er the smooth enamell’d green,
 “ Where no print of step hath been.”*

It has been now explored by unnumbered visitors, but it is still fresh and beautiful; and the elastic moss seems still to have been only trodden by its native tenants, the thousands of fearless hares and rabbits, that the kindness of the late proprietor encouraged about his domain. The security and consequent fearlessness of the feathered tribe, and the most timorous of the animal creation, in the unfrequented woodlands of Fonthill, is very accurately painted by the great father of English Poetry.

“ On every bough the birdis herd I syng,
 “ With voice of Angell in their harmonie,
 “ That busied hem, ther birdis foorth to bryng,
 “ And little prettie conies to ther plaie gan hie ;

* Milton’s Arcades.

“ And further all aboute I gan espie
 “ The dredeful ewe, the buck, the harte and hynde,
 “ Squirrils and bestis small of gentle kynde.”*

Our path continues, by an agreeable descent, to wind round Hinckley Hill,

“ Underneath the brim
 “ Of sailing pines, that edge yon mountain in.”†

An impervious fence of oak, elm, beech, hazel, and fir, almost completely shuts out the distant landscape ; and the character of the walk is that of perfect seclusion. The undulations of the surface occasionally give a beautiful variety to the scene, and this variety is perpetually heightened by the different character of the trees. The dark and solemn pine is succeeded by the sparkling and feathery birch, “ the Lady of the Woods,” — and the lofty ash gives place to the humble and fragrant hawthorn. Every species of moss, too, forms a carpet more varied than the tints of the richest looms ; and we almost hesitate to tread upon the tender shoots which are matted in the closest texture. We at length reach a grand opening to the distant country : the eye, which has been so long prisoned in these leafy avenues, now ranges to the hills beyond Chilmark, which bound the prospect. Turning to look up the walk which we have passed, a grand scene is presented. At a height which we vainly endeavour to measure, are seen the towers of the Abbey ; and we may long pause with a feeling of deep admiration, to behold its

“ brave turret tops
 “ Over the statelie wood.”‡

In the greater number of our walks about Fonthill, we have felt strongly impressed with the care by which the buildings of the Abbey have been made to harmonize with the general scenery. In this particular, we know no modern

* Chaucer.

† Fletcher.

‡ Brown's *Britannia's Pastorals*.

erection which deserves such unqualified praise. We too often behold our ordinary builders abandoning the character of "*l'architecto-pittore*," and preparing their elevations without the slightest notice of their relation to the general landscape. It is not so at Fonthill. The Abbey and its accompanying scenery were produced under the direction of one superintending mind; the building, therefore, and its surrounding woods have an equal character of security and seclusion. We feel, in our romantic moods, that the Abbey is a place dedicated in its grandeur to the most impressive of religions—that the votaries who are there destined to live apart from the world, are fenced about with all objects of gentleness and beauty, "around a holy calm diffusing,"—and that, though they may wander from grove to grove in paths where the most lovely and the most luxuriant of shrubs and trees

"High o'er arch'd imbower,"

they are perpetually recalled to their vocation by the lofty turrets of their cloistered abode, looking down upon them with a serene and solemn majesty. There are moments when the architectural grandeur of Fonthill Abbey bears us far away from the history of its erection; when we regard it as a relic of the times when the be-lated peasant would have looked upward to its twilight towers as the dwelling place of sanctified beings, and would have prostrated himself in pious awe, when the dying sounds of the Evening Hymn were borne upon his ear by the fitful breeze. These days of impassioned feeling are past; Fonthill must be now judged, not by its real association, but by its capacity as a modern work of art to carry us back into the æras of its prototypes.

The winding and undulating path which we have followed, leads us round Hinckley Hill to the northern extremity of the Beacon Terrace. We cross this terrace, and pass on to what is called the Lower North Walk. The paths are here more open;—the plantations are more penetrable to the eye;—the

surface is covered with a thick brushwood, and the trees are of older growth. We pass through a larch walk, without any great variety of scenery presenting itself; and we at length reach a point at which we cross the Clerk's walk. A beautiful glimpse of the south western angle of the Abbey is here presented to us. A path, without any particular beauty, conducts us to the extremity of the Great Western Avenue. It is a peculiar feature of the grounds of Fonthill, that the horror of straight lines has not banished the appropriate features of the avenue from a place that is intended to produce a still and solemn impression. We have here several of those grand perspectives,

“Small by degrees and beautifully less,”

which our ancestors largely associated with their ideas of repose and grandeur. The avenues of Fonthill are, however, different from those vistas which are produced by long rows of one species of tree set at equal distances. The beautiful avenue, down which we now gaze upon the great mass of the Abbey in one of its grandest elevations, is produced by bounding a wide green path with trees and shrubs of every denomination, planted without order, and forming on each side an impervious thicket. In this particular, it partakes of the general character of these singular grounds. The effects which are to be attained by this “obsolete prolixity of shade,” are of course very imperfectly developed in the comparatively recent creation of these walks; but that these effects will be peculiarly suited to the religious character of the edifice, we can have no hesitation in affirming. Those, who would see Fonthill Abbey under one of its most impressive appearances, should visit this avenue, when the moon sheds its brilliancy over this immense structure, breaking down all its minute parts into one broad and majestic mass. We were tempted to this experiment by the recollection of a parallel description from a delightful author, and the remembrance of our impressions leads us to transcribe the pas-

sage. "All the characteristic beauties of the avenue, its solemn stillness, the religious awe it inspires, are greatly heightened by moonlight. This I once very strongly experienced in approaching a venerable castle-like mansion, built in the beginning of the 15th century; a few gleams had pierced the deep gloom of the avenue; a large massive tower at the end of it, seen through a long perspective, and half lit by the uncertain beams of the moon, had a grand mysterious effect. Suddenly, a light appeared in the tower, then as suddenly its twinkling vanished, and only the silvery rays of the moon prevailed; again more lights quickly shifted to different parts of the building, and the whole scene most forcibly brought to my fancy the times of fairies and chivalry."* Such a scene at Fonthill brings to mind the times of devotional seclusion; and when we behold above its turrets some dim light glimmering at a prodigious elevation, we forget the common inhabitants of a modern dwelling, and fancy that *there* is the cell of the pale votary whose

"Lamp at midnight hour

"Is seen in some high lonely tower."†

But we must continue our ramble.

We approach towards the Abbey, by the Great Western Avenue, till we reach the point where it is intersected by the Beacon Terrace. This is again a fine open avenue, bounded in an irregular line by every variety of forest tree and garden shrub—by oaks, firs, thorns, birch, laburnums, and accacias. As we ascend, the avenue widens into a lawn, sloping down the hill to the Bitham Vale. In this walk we have several magnificent views of the Abbey. We ascend to the top of this Terrace to the Beacon, a tower commenced by Alderman Beckford, but not yet completed. This is the highest south western

* Price on the Picturesque.

† Il Penseroso.

point in the neighbourhood of the Abbey, and commands some most extensive and delightful views over the surrounding country.

We descend from the Beacon by the Bitham slope; and at every step we have some grand and varied prospect of the Abbey, produced by the variety of surface over which we pass. The most striking prospect across the valley forms a very beautiful illustration of this work. We at length reach the Bitham Lake, a charming piece of water, ornamented with lofty banks, and possessing the most tranquil and secluded character. It is the haunt of wild fowl, who have long peopled this undisturbed region. We follow the northern margin of the lake till we reach the American Gardens—and here how shall we describe the labyrinth of sweets by which we are surrounded! It was our good fortune to behold this extraordinary shrubbery at the season of its greatest beauty. Its winding paths led us through groves of the loftiest rhododendrons, whose deep pink flowers shed an universal glow over an extensive declivity—here and there the beautiful magnolia displayed the exquisite whiteness of its large blossoms—while clusters of azaleas mingled with these loftier exotics in the richest harmony of colour and fragrance; the Carolina rose profusely studded the walks with its gorgeous blossoms—the allspice of the same region shed its exquisite perfume over the whole extent of these gardens—and the arbutus luxuriated in groups as lofty and as branching as the Portugal laurel. We must borrow from the greatest of descriptive poets some images that may furnish a faint idea of these unrivalled plantations.

“ West winds with musky wing
“ About the Cedarn alleys fling,
“ Nard and Cassia’s balmy smells.
“ Iris there, with humid bow,
“ Waters the odorous banks that blow
“ Flowers of more mingled hue,
“ Than her purpled scarf can shew.”*

* Comus.



VIEW OF THE WEST & SOUTH FRONTS.

From the River Stour.

Engraved from a drawing by J. G. Smith.

We have thus traced the most attractive walk within the barrier. A steep ascent conducts us to the Southern Lawn, from which we set out. But from the ground we have passed, we may deviate into many secluded spots of exquisite beauty, with which he only can be acquainted who has made the ever-varying thickets of this remarkable place his

“Daily walks and antient neighbourhood.”

The opportunities for such an acquaintance have, of course, been very rare. In such a secluded spot, is one of the few objects of art which will admit of particular description. It is a sort of log house, of very tasteful proportions, and altogether in perfect harmony with the general scenery, called the Norwegian Hut ; but no delineation in words can convey so perfect an impression of this little building, as the spirited wood cut with which we close this ramble.

THE NORWEGIAN HUT.



*A SCENE IN THE ALPINE GARDENS.



CHAPTER V.

Walk without the Barrier.

WE are about to enter upon a scene very different from that we have passed ; we are about to quit those grounds which have been entirely created by the genius of their late possessor, to ramble through walks which were the appendage of a former mansion, and which now owe something of their picturesque charm to the comparative neglect into which they have fallen. They are not, like the inclosed grounds, constructed upon one pervading principle of art ;

but have in many parts a wild and uncultivated character, and derive their attraction from the beauty of their situation, rather than from the taste of their embellishment. They were originally adapted to other scenes than the present extraordinary building ; but they offer no discrepancy in the general character of the place, and they afford a pleasing relief to some of its more imposing features.

We would lead our readers, on some clear and brightening morning, to the Inn called the Beckford Arms. At this place there is a very exquisite view across the valley, of the lake and its hanging woods. A little in advance of this spot we enter the Old Park. Our path leads through the higher ground towards the Church of Fonthill Gifford, but leaving the road to Hindon on our left. The prospects which this walk presents are exceedingly rich and varied. Beneath us is the lake, whose precipitous bank is clothed with the most luxuriant foliage ; the road of the park lies before us, terminating in the beautiful Entrance Lodge. Beyond is the village of Fonthill Bishop ; and on the horizon are the extensive downs of High Park, forming a part of this large domain. The church, which is before us on our left, is a feeble attempt to produce the effect of a Grecian temple ; and though a pretty object from some points, is far from according with the majestic character of the edifice that rises out of the neighbouring hill. We soon enter some thickets, and here we occasionally catch some delightful glimpses of the lake. Having passed these coverts, we leave the left-hand path leading to the village, and ascend the hill to a fine old knoll called the Rook wood. We wind round this eminence, and soon a splendid view of the lake bursts upon us. This fine piece of water is rarely seen from a more advantageous point. We avoid crossing the plain, and keep close under the hill. The pavilion, a wing of the old mansion, is beneath us, and it forms an interesting object. Our walk lies onward to the Entrance Lodge, on the right of which we cross a thicket, which leads to a fine

old building, in very admirable taste, called the Boat House. This singular structure is formed of a large centre archway, retreating to a considerable depth, and terminating in a dome; on each side are archways of smaller dimensions, forming the entrances to a colonnade round the basin, which is constructed of 12 square columns rising into a vaulted roof. At the extremity of this building is some rock work, through which drips a crystal spring. We may here take boat and enjoy a row on the lake, beneath the hanging foliage of the Alpine Gardens on its eastern banks. The landing place leads to a steep ascent, in which, through groves of forest trees and shrubs, we occasionally look down upon the watery mirror we have quitted. The walk in this part is extremely picturesque; there is a wild and neglected character about the roads and paths, which leads us away from every idea of recent cultivation, and yet these groves have evidently been the resort of elegance and luxury at no very distant period:

“ High roof’d, and walks beneath, and alleys brown
“ That open’d in the midst a woody scene;
“ Nature’s own work it seem’d, (nature taught art)
“ And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
“ Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs.”*

We at length reach a considerable open space, covered with a profusion of shrubs, the red and guelder rose, the seringa, the lilac, the laburnum, the laurel, and the thorn. There is still an air of wildness about this cultivation, and this effect is greatly heightened by the contiguity of some old quarries of free-stone hewn into deep caverns of the most romantic forms. These are surmounted with firs; and the impending projections of the rock in some places partake of almost a sublime character; the excavations are divided into two compartments. Rude flights of steps lead from one excavation to the other, and

* Paradise Regained.

thence to the summit of the rocks. 'The whole scene will amply repay us for a lingering visit.

We descend from this spot towards the lake, by a path whose sides are covered with an infinity of wild flowers. At the Fairies' Lawn, another delightful little opening, we turn from the path which leads to the lake, and ascending to the left, an unequalled view of the Abbey presents itself. The foreground is beautifully broken and varied—the lake lies before us in its deep tranquillity—the eye reposes upon the verdant plain of the Old Park—the fresh tints of this middle distance are beautifully contrasted with the solemn hue of the woods of Hinckley Hill—and the giant tower rising out of these on the left, crowns the whole scene with a magnificence which leaves the imagination nothing to desire. Taking a little path to the right, we descend the hill to some rocks which form a series of grottoes. These cool retreats have been hewn out of the natural rock, with a few ornamental additions in the taste of the last century. The springs, from which Fonthill derives its name, here offer their tribute to the lake which flows up to the seat of the second grotto.

Following the margin of the lake by a path, lined with roses and crowned with beech, we arrive at the end of the lake. The view from this point is very rich, and gives a favourable idea of those advantages which the old mansion possessed in compensation for the flatness of its site. Ascending the western banks, a very charming view is obtained of the opposite wood. Passing between the Keeper's Lodge and the lake, we reach a rude erection in imitation of a Cromlech; and here again the prospect is very pleasing. We descend to a building called the Hermitage, whose ruinous state indicates that the taste which presided over such erections is gone by. This leads us by a short detour to some caverns beneath the public road, of very considerable dimensions, and possessing all that gloom and mystery which renders it a task of

some courage to explore them. They are hewn in the rock, and when the eye becomes familiar to the “darkness visible” of their interior, it will discover that they are formed with great boldness and effect, and have altogether the character of a romantic magnificence. Having passed through this subterranean road, we reach a small lawn ; and a path through a thicket soon places us on the highway to the Inn from which we set out.

THE BOAT HOUSE.



FONTHILL GIFFORD CHURCH.



CHAPTER VI.

Ride through the Domain.

THE great extent of the estate of Fonthill renders it impossible, that any occasional visitor can form a just idea of the many picturesque situations and magnificent prospects which these grounds afford. There are, however, some points of remarkable beauty ; and we have endeavoured to combine them by the arrangement of a Ride, which with some exertion may be accomplished in a few hours.

On the right of the Barrier, as we reach this gate from the Abbey, is an entrance leading into an open space, formerly cultivated as a Kitchen Garden. The view of the Abbey from this road is extremely commanding. Our route descends to the southern margin of the Bitham Lake. We pass under the hill, called Whitmead Wood, displaying a great variety of forest trees; and we skirt the Norwegian Lawn, remarkable for the peculiar loftiness and beauty of its pines. From this spot, a walk studded with rhododendrons leads to several paths up a steep ascent, and we at length reach the summit of the Beacon Hill. The gradual descent from the Beacon to the stone gate is exceedingly pleasing. On our left is a fine extent of vale, bounded by hills, stretching off with a bold outline, till they are lost in the distance; and on our right, the turrets of the Abbey occasionally burst upon our leafy seclusion. Having passed the barrier, an opposite gate admits into Riddlemoor woods; and a long labyrinth of shady rides brings us to Knoyle Corner, the western extremity of the Estate. The prospect from this point is seldom exceeded in extent and richness.

A circuitous path, bordered by trimmed hedges, conducts us to the extremity of the Great Terrace. This celebrated ridge forms a magnificent drive of about three miles from this point to the entrance Lodge of the old Park. It is a green avenue, varying in width from 50 to 200 yards; its greatest attraction is the grandeur of the prospects which it presents of the Abbey. On this side, the hill offers one broad mass of wood, of prodigious extent, with a deep glen between; and the eye ranges from its base, till the outline is terminated by that remarkable edifice, which seems to reign over a vast region of lonely magnificence. At the two-mile post on the Terrace, this road is the most imposing.

We leave the gardens of the old Mansion, still used as the gardens of the Abbey, on our right; and continuing our course, a scene of great picturesque

beauty is presented to us. In the glen beneath the Terrace, are the cottages of Fonthill Gifford, crouching under the hanging woods of the princely domain to which they belong, and presenting their tranquil simplicity and unpretending neatness as a pleasing contrast to the magnificence by which they are surrounded.

The terrace now descends to a gate leading to the turnpike road ; and here passing through the village of Fonthill Bishop, we cross the Downs of High Park Lodge. This building consists of a sitting room and kitchen, with some other offices ; the principal room is distinguished by the usual splendid ornament of the Abbey, plate glass : and here the late possessor sometimes retired for a few hours from the gorgeousness by which he was ordinarily surrounded. The elevation is in good taste, and presents a pleasing object in a spot seldom explored. The view of the Abbey here is very imposing.

Our ride continues through copses, till we reach some downs and arable grounds, and we here descend to the turnpike road from Salisbury to Hindon. We cross this, and by an opposite gate reach a gentle height, called Mount Pleasant. A singular building was here erected by Mr. Beckford, for occasional shelter for himself and his retinue ; it commands some beautiful and extensive prospects.

From Mount Pleasant, a steep declivity leads to a finely wooded vale, and afterwards ascends to the eastern extremity of Little Ridge, a hill thickly clothed with timber, and exhibiting many luxuriant paths, in which the wanderer might " think down hours to minutes." We at length reach an open elevation, whose few and scrubby trees show that it is a wood whose beauty has passed away. Near this spot was the ancient Mansion of Fonthill. The views from this eminence are exceedingly grand. From the left to the right, the eye ranges from Castle Ditches to the plain between Salisbury and Shaftesbury, on to Wardour Terrace, and thence to the vale of Tisbury ; the enclosed

grounds of Fonthill now unite in the Landscape, and we linger with delight on the richness and grandeur of the Beacon-hill, and the towers of the Abbey ; the Rook Wood and the Terrace bound the extensive range.

We descend to the head of the Lake by Ashley Wood, and crossing the plain, find our ride again terminated by the Inn of Fonthill Gifford.

HIGH PARK LODGE, OR SUMMER HOUSE.

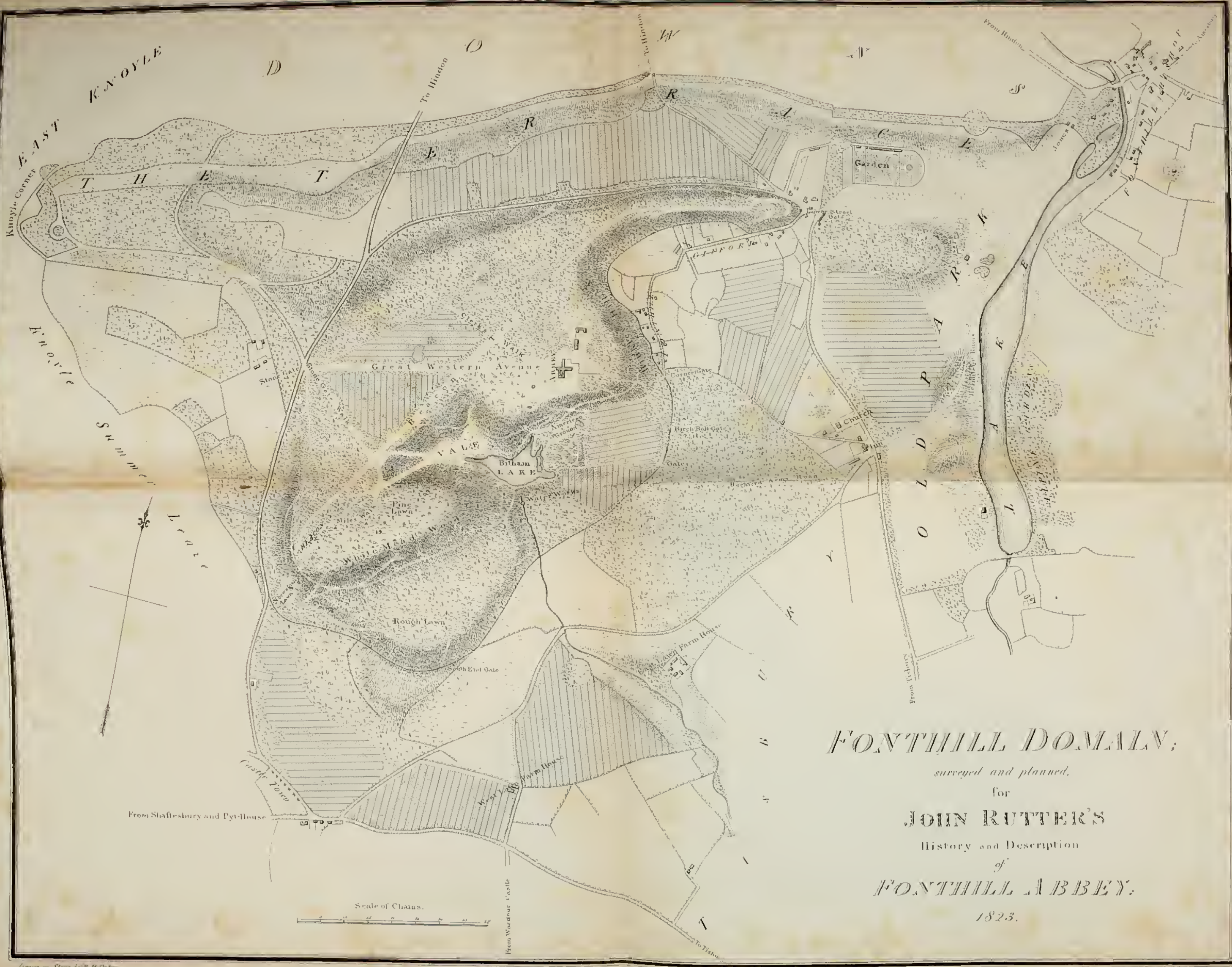




Engraved by J. G. A. M.

THE GREAT HALL OF THE CASTLE OF BATH





FONTHILL DOMAIN,
surveyed and planned,
for
JOHN RUTTER'S
History and Description
of
FONTHILL ABBEY.
1823.

Scale of Chains.
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

APPENDIX.

THE REMAINING WING, OR PAVILION.



APPENDIX A.

Historical Notices of the Manor of Fonthill Gifford ;

AND OF THE FORMER MANSIONS.

THE Manor of Fonthill, Fountell, Fontel, or Funtell, (so called probably from the local circumstance of the abundant springs that gush from the sides of its hills,) is situate in the Hundred of Dunworth, and south western division of the county of Wilts ; and appears, from domesday book, to have been assessed in the time of Edward the Confessor at five hides. The land consisted of seven carucates, and of these in demesne was one hide, having three plough-lands and four servi, or servants. Six villani, or villagers, occupied four plough-lands. The mill paid five shillings. The

pasture was half a league long, and three furlongs broad, the wood half a mile long, and a quarter broad. The whole manor was valued in the Confessor's time at a hundred shillings, and then at six pounds.

Its additional name of Gifford appears to have been derived from the eminent family of that name, who held this with fourteen other manors in Wilts shortly after the conquest, and in domesday book Funtell is described as part of the possessions of Berenger Gifford, in whose family it continued until the 11th of John, when it was sold by Robert Gifford to Sir Robert Mauduit, Knight; and in the 19th of Edward the 3rd. John Mauduit obtained from the king a charter of free warren in all his demesne lands at Funtell, and other manors in Wilts.

Through the Mauduits it passed by marriage into the family of the Lords Moleyns, and on the 8th of July, 3rd Henry VI., Richard Lord Moleyns departed this life, seized of Fontell; his successor, William Lord Moleyns, was slain in the following year at the siege of Orleans, leaving Alianor his daughter and heiress then only three years of age, by a marriage with whom this manor with other large estates came into the possession of Sir Robert Hungerford, Knt. upon whose attainder in the 1st year of Edward IV. 1461, the whole of his estates, and among them Funtell Gifford, were seized by the crown, and granted to John Lord Wenlock, afterwards slain in rebellion at the battle of Tewkesbury on the 4th May, 11 Edward IV. leaving neither wife or issue, and the estate again reverted to the crown.

The next possessors of the Manor of Fonthill were the Mervyns, but by what title they acquired it, there is no known record extant. It was probably either granted to them by the crown, or purchased on the death of Lord Wenlock.

It has been supposed that the family of the Wests, Lord Delawarre, were once possessed of the Manor of Fonthill Gifford, but from documents recently obtained, there is every reason to believe that such was not the case, inasmuch as by them the uninterrupted descent of the property, from the Giffords to the Lord Wenlock in 1472, is clearly shewn; it is, however, certain, that the Wests did hold lands and a Manor at Fonthill, and that the latter was distinguished from the other Manor by the title of Fonthill de la Warre, and was a separate and distinct Manor, as will be seen by a reference to the following dates. In 1450, twenty-two years before the death of Lord Wenlock, Reginald de West died, seized of the Manor of Fountell; and Thomas West, Lord de la Warre in 1552, bequeathed his Manor of Fontell to Thomas his son and heir, who died in 1554; (2d of Mary,) beyond this period the registers of the family of West are silent as to Fountell, and it no longer appears among the list of the other Wiltshire property belonging to them. We have nothing to

guide us in our conjecture, when the rights of the Manor of Fountell de la Warre were united to those of Fountell Gifford, or how otherwise they were disposed of, but it is most probable that a union took place some time prior to 1554.

With the hand of Lucy, the daughter and heiress of Sir John Mervyn, Knight, Fonthill Gifford passed into the possession of George Lord Audley, created Earl of Castlehaven, 14 Jac I. in whose family it continued until the attainder of Mervyn Lord Audley, in 1631, when it was granted to Sir Francis, afterwards Lord Cottington, a distinguished courtier and minister of James and Charles the 1st. Shortly after the possession of the manor by his son, Sir Thomas Cottington, who appears to have given offence to the parliament by assisting the Earl of Marlborough in his attempts to relieve Wardour Castle, the whole of his estates were confiscated, and Fonthill was given to the President Bradshaw, upon whose death Lord Cottington returned to his house with a numerous party of friends and followers, and driving out Bradshaw's heir, maintained himself against all further attacks until the restoration ensued, and confirmed him in quiet possession. With his family it continued during the succeeding reigns and until its alienation by sale to the late Alderman Beckford. Upon his decease, it descended to the late proprietor, William Beckford, Esq. at that time a minor, during whose possession additions were made to the estate that increased its area to near six thousand acres; by this gentleman it was sold in 1822 to John Farquhar, Esq. of London, who has since added about three thousand acres to the estate by the purchase of some adjoining property.

The earliest mansion upon this demesne, of which there is any description or representation, was one probably built or greatly enlarged during the long occupation of the Mervyns. A painting was preserved at the Abbey, purporting to be a view of it in 1566, when it had perhaps recently received such additions as excited a desire of representing them pictorially; this idea is strengthened by the style of the building, which appears to have been erected in the taste which prevailed at the time, as visible among all the English mansions of importance built or enlarged about the middle of the sixteenth century. This edifice formed three sides of a quadrangle, having the fourth occupied by a sort of screen or cloister of one story, in the centre of which was the entrance to the court, directly opposite to the principal door of the building. The windows were large, divided by mullions and transoms; and the fronts terminated in gables along the whole line. A large advanced court enclosed, occupied a considerable area in front of the whole edifice, along the centre of which and parallel to the house, ran a canal, crossed by a bridge. In the middle of the front line of this court, at a great distance from the house, stood a detached gate-

way or barbican of two stories in height, highly decorated, and having a turret of three stories, crowned by a cupola at each angle. Beyond all these, another line of circumvallation was drawn, which appears to have enclosed all the detached offices, gardens, fish-ponds, &c.; and adjoining the principal building on the right, was a wing of lower elevation; and to the left was the plaisance, having a small piece of water with an island in the centre.

The fate of this mansion is unknown, nor is it certain whether any other was erected between it and that which Alderman Beckford found upon the estate. From the views which exist of the latter, and a lodge which still remains, as well as from the tradition which up to the present time calls it "Jones's Lodge," there can be no doubt that this mansion was designed by the celebrated Inigo Jones himself, and the probability is, that when the grant of the estate was made to the favourite Cottington, he, either from the dilapidated state of the existing mansion, or a desire to mark his sense of the favour and preserve the remembrance of it, determined to erect an edifice of superior character, and in that new taste which had then recently been imported. Jones had distinguished himself in the County at Wilton, the seat of his munificent patron, Lord Pembroke,—he was court architect, and enjoying high reputation from the new style he had been the means principally of introducing into England, and from the beautiful and magnificent specimens he had himself executed. With such distinctions, there was no other whom Sir Francis Cottington, himself a man of taste, could have consulted on the designs of his intended mansion.

The plan of this house was something similar to the last, but with this difference,—that the rear of the one was made the front of the other. The court was thrown behind, and the centre or principal body of the edifice was in advance, and turned to the south, so that it looked along the little valley which is now embanked into a beautiful lake. The site appears to have been a little more to the north, than that of the one it succeeded. The style of the edifice was Italian, and what would appear a defect in so low a situation, the principal floor was not raised upon a basement.

This mansion came into the possession of Alderman Beckford when he purchased the estate of Fonthill; and after he had expended large sums in improving and furnishing it, a fire which burst out in 1755 levelled it with the ground. The momentary regret its loss occasioned in the mind of Mr. Beckford, was succeeded by a resolution to rebuild it with greater splendour; and the new edifice was immediately commenced. It was a principal building with two detached wings or pavilions,

connected with the centre by colonnades of a circular form. The dimensions were grand, and the fittings-up expensive.

The position of these houses seems to have been far from judicious—very low, and after the lake had been made, subject to frequent fogs,—a public road passing through the lodge and running close to the mansion, between it and the lake, destroyed entirely that privacy and quiet so desirable in a country residence; and these objections were certainly not reduced by the view, which was circumscribed in its limits, and though beautiful, extremely monotonous in its character. The greater part of these defects were without remedy, and yet must have been felt every hour; there is therefore little room for surprise, that when, to the advantages of the site of the present edifice, came to be added, the progressive attractions of a building so totally different from the common-place of art, and which, together with the scenery around it, was the sole creation of the proprietor's powerful imagination; the insalubrity, monotony, and publicity of the old mansion, pressed with irresistible force upon the mind of him

“ Whose wish was law—and every law obey'd,”

and decided the question of removal. In 1807, therefore, the whole of this mansion, except one pavilion which still remains to mark its site and extent, was demolished, and its costly materials disposed of by public sale.

THE CONVENT IN RUINS.



APPENDIX B.

MEMORANDA

OF THE

Origin and Progress of Fonthill Abbey.

UP to the end of the year 1795, the master passion or ruling taste for architectural splendour, which characterizes the late possessor of Fonthill Abbey, appears to have laid dormant ; or at least confined itself to some inconsiderable improvements in the mansion erected by his father. About the period mentioned, his attention seems to have been directed to the erection of a tower on the summit of the highest hill upon the estate, the foundations of which had been already laid by the late Alderman, after a design similar to the celebrated tower of Alfred at Stourhead, viz. triangular, with a turret at each angle. It was, however, never completed, and it is probable,

that from the numerous visits which the proposed erection of the Beacon Hill rendered necessary, the great attractions of the present site of the Abbey, its convenience, and above all, to a lover of natural beauty and extensive scenery, the luxury of "a lodge in this fair wilderness," might have pressed so strongly on the attention of Mr. Beckford, as to produce the order which, in the year 1796, was received by the late Mr. Wyatt, his architect, to make a design for an intended structure, which should contain a suite of rooms, small, but amply sufficient for the enjoyment of a day whether "of sunshine or of shower." Its external characteristic was to be that of a Convent, partly in ruins and partly perfect, and probably nothing could have been more happy than the embodied idea which the architect laid before his patron. At once elegant, appropriate, and intelligible, its beauty and fitness were instantaneously felt, and its effect impossible to be mistaken. The chapel, the parlour, the dormitory, and one small cloister alone, appeared to have survived the period which had buried the refectory, the kitchen, and every other part of the edifice in one common ruin; and it was perhaps to the very excellence of the original design that we may ascribe the cause of its not being carried into execution.

His ideas having thus assumed "a local habitation and a name," a new area was opened for the vigorous and excursive imagination of Mr. Beckford, the unlimited range of which imposed continual and increased demands upon the skill and attention of the architect, who, during the winter of 1796-7, appears to have been almost wholly occupied in the formation and completion of a series of designs, comprising the grand octagon of the present structure, and the whole of the buildings to the south and west of it. The style and archetype of the original plan was however never lost sight of in the various and progressive additions, and although the situation of one of its principal members was altered, it was only that it might be placed in a more distinguished and conspicuous point of view. The general arrangement of the plan in these designs is therefore nearly the same as we now find it in the Abbey, though a few of the apartments may have changed their destination, and some others their names. The Western Yellow Drawing Room and Gothic Cabinet were then the chamber and dressing room of the proprietor; the Great Octagon was a chapel, and the Western Entrance a dining hall, having no communication with the Octagon, except that a tribune or gallery overlooked it, from whence it might be presumed the lectures were to be delivered, as was usual during meals in all monastic establishments. Notwithstanding the magnitude of this plan, no idea of the durability which attaches to a permanent dwelling was ever entertained—no residence appears to have been then or for many years afterwards intended, and even if it had been, it is probable

the eager impatience of Mr. Beckford would hardly then have borne the necessarily slow progress of a work of such dimensions, when composed of solid materials, and designed for posterity. Timber and cement were therefore the principal articles in its construction, and every expedient was used to complete the building within a given time, regardless of the consequences that might almost have been expected to ensue. Neither the still hour of night, or the accustomed day of rest from labour—the gathering in of the harvest, or even the wishes of the greatest personage in the kingdom, were allowed to interfere with or delay for one hour the progress of the works. One immediate consequence of this injudicious haste was the destruction of the first tower, which was carried up to its extreme height, without time being allowed to complete the fastenings of it to the base on which it was erected; a smart gust of wind acting suddenly upon a large flag, attached to a scaffold pole, at its summit, carried it off its base altogether. The fall was tremendous and sublime, and the only regret expressed by Mr. Beckford upon the occasion, was that he had not witnessed its destruction. He then instantly gave orders for the erection of a new tower.

Gigantic as was the stride from the original design of “the Convent in Ruins,” to the Convent we have attempted to pourtray, (an appellation it preserved for several years) the appetite of its founder remained unsatisfied; and in the two following years, the erection of King Edward’s Gallery had been commenced to carry on the amazing perspective, which yet scarcely dawned in the Library, (i. e. the present St. Michael’s Gallery,) and great advances were made in the completion of the rooms to the south.

In the year 1800, Admiral Lord Nelson, with the celebrated Lady Hamilton, and other distinguished characters, were visitors at Fonthill, and upon that occasion a Fête was given in “the Convent,” the preparations for which necessarily hastened the completion of several of the southern rooms, but all the fittings-up beyond the Library were temporary.

After this, little appears to have been done for some years, and perhaps, more never would have been done, had not the idea of abandoning the old mansion and making the Convent a residence, suggested itself to the active imagination of the proprietor. This thought at once seems to have rekindled all his ardour, and again called forth that peculiar energy and perseverance for which he has been distinguished. Some of the out-buildings of the old mansion were immediately demolished, and the materials employed in the erection of the upper part of King Edward’s Gallery, the Lancaster Tower, &c. Designs were ordered to be prepared for a grand range of

towers, to run direct eastward from the Lancaster Tower; another and another succeeded each, and were successively demolished, until finally they shrunk into the small, but internally beautiful adjuncts of the Sanctuary and Oratory.

The avowed intention of residing, naturally occasioned some attention to be paid to the degree of stability, which might be expected from a series of works so hastily carried up and finished, as all the preceding erections at the Convent had been. The increasing attachment of Mr. Beckford for the new edifice, a feeling which seems to have "grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength," at length produced a serious desire for its permanance and durability: the whole building was therefore surveyed; the timber and cement work of the Central Tower and two others condemned, and two new towers entirely of stone were directed to be built.

In the year 1807, the proprietor removed to "FONTHILL ABBEY," the title now for the first time given to the new residence, and the materials of the splendid mansion erected by the late Alderman Beckford, with great part of its contents, were consigned to the hammer.

The wants of a large establishment, distributed over a building so eccentric in its character, soon demanded further additions. Towers were erected or heightened to create chambers; and offices, on the plan of those at Glastonbury Abbey, were designed for the greater convenience of the inhabitants.

All attempts to warm the Great Hall sufficiently for its intended use as a Refectory, proving ineffectual, the apartment was finally devoted to the less important, though more effective purpose, of a State Entrance to the Chapel. To obtain sufficient depth for this object, the original hall was increased in its dimensions; the Tribune, which separated the Hall from the Octagon, and the vast fire-place (the remains of which still exist beneath the Statue) were removed, and the present flight of steps at the east end introduced; these alterations were completed about 1809-10.

The disposition of the several parts of the Chapel in the original design, had been made with great skill and effect—the plan of this part of the principal story was that of the Latin cross, the longest arm of which was occupied by the Library—the three shorter branches radiating from the chapel. In the one opposite to the Library, a large painted window, filled with a scriptural subject, was intended to be placed; the altar was to have been erected in the eastern recess; and the organ over the Tribune, between the Chapel and the Hall. The present Tribune room was a chantry, dedicated to St. Thomas á Becket, and above it was an apartment, called "the Revelation Chamber," from the subjects proposed for the painted windows; several

of the designs for which, from the Apocalypse, were prepared by the late President of the Royal Academy.

The arrangement thus made was, however, soon broken in upon by the addition of King Edward's Gallery; but the original intention of a Chapel in the Octagon, was perhaps not abandoned, until after the erection of the stairs from the Hall, and the happy idea had been elicited of providing a succedaneum in the present Oratory. If any thing still were wanting to destroy all fitness in the Octagon, for the purpose of a Chapel, it was the opening of the south side, after the Eastern Transept had been built. Considerable delay appears to have arisen in the erection of this important addition to the structure, as it was not until 1812, that the architect's attention seems to have been seriously directed to it. Its absence must long have been felt as a defect, both internally and externally—internally, a curtain concealed the shallowness of the recess; but the disposition to proceed forward, which the ascent of the grand flight of steps would impress upon a visitor, would not subside until an explanation, or the appearance of some object more impassable than a mere drapery, convinced him of its impossibility. Externally its presence was of still greater consequence, to divide and screen from sight one half at least of the offensive perspective, which the neglected architecture of the eastern division must have always presented.

The Kitchen Court and South East Quadrangle, were originally intended to be enclosed by an embattled wall, and the entrance to the latter was to have been beneath a tower, erected close to the present bank, opposite the Eastern Postern. The Laundry and other offices were to be placed in castellated buildings near the Kitchen Court and the Stables; to form the four sides of an enclosed square a little further to the north. Their external elevation was intended to have been remarkable for its peculiar character.

APPENDIX C.

Genealogical Tables.

HAVING so frequently had occasion to allude to the splendid genealogical connexions of Mr. Beckford, we here subjoin the following Tables in further illustration of our observations thereon.

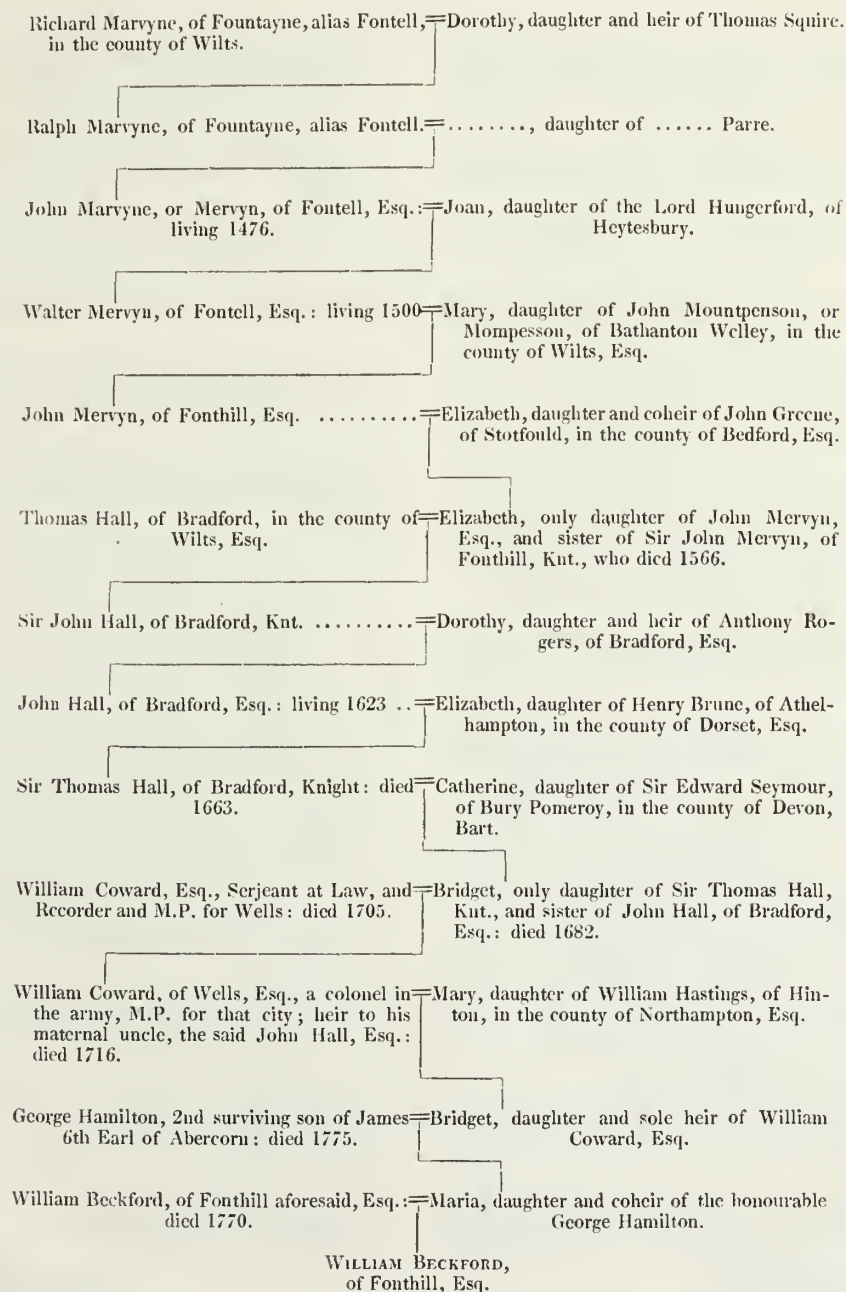
The first, shewing the descent from the family of Mervyn, the ancient possessors of Fonthill, referred to in the description of St. Michael's Gallery, page 56.

The second, setting forth his descent from all the sons of King Edward the Third, from whom there is any issue remaining, more particularly illustrated by the armorial decorations of the Gallery of that name, page 37.

The third, shewing his lineal descent from William Lord Latimer, Baron of Corby, summoned to Parliament in the time of King Edward the First, whose Armorial Achievements form so conspicuous a feature in various parts of the Abbey, and which are referred to, page 57.

TABLE I.

*Shewing the Descent of WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq. from the ancient Family of
MERVYN, Possessors of Fonthill.*



Shewing the Descent of WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq., from KING EDWARD THE 7

William Beckford,
of Fonthill Abbey, Esq.

II.

IRD, through all the sons of that monarch, from whom there is any issue.

IPPA, of Hainault, Queen of
England: died 1369.

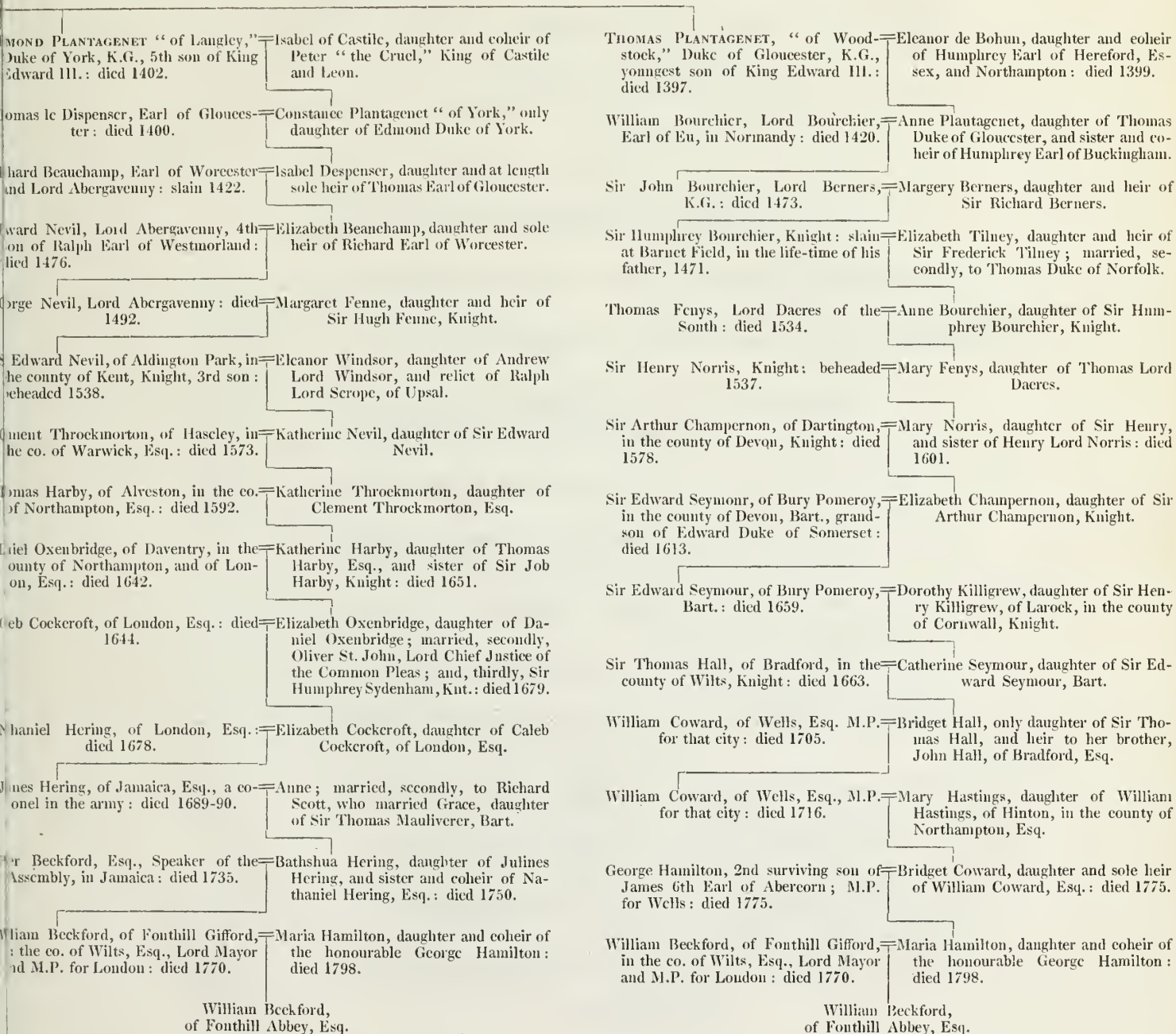
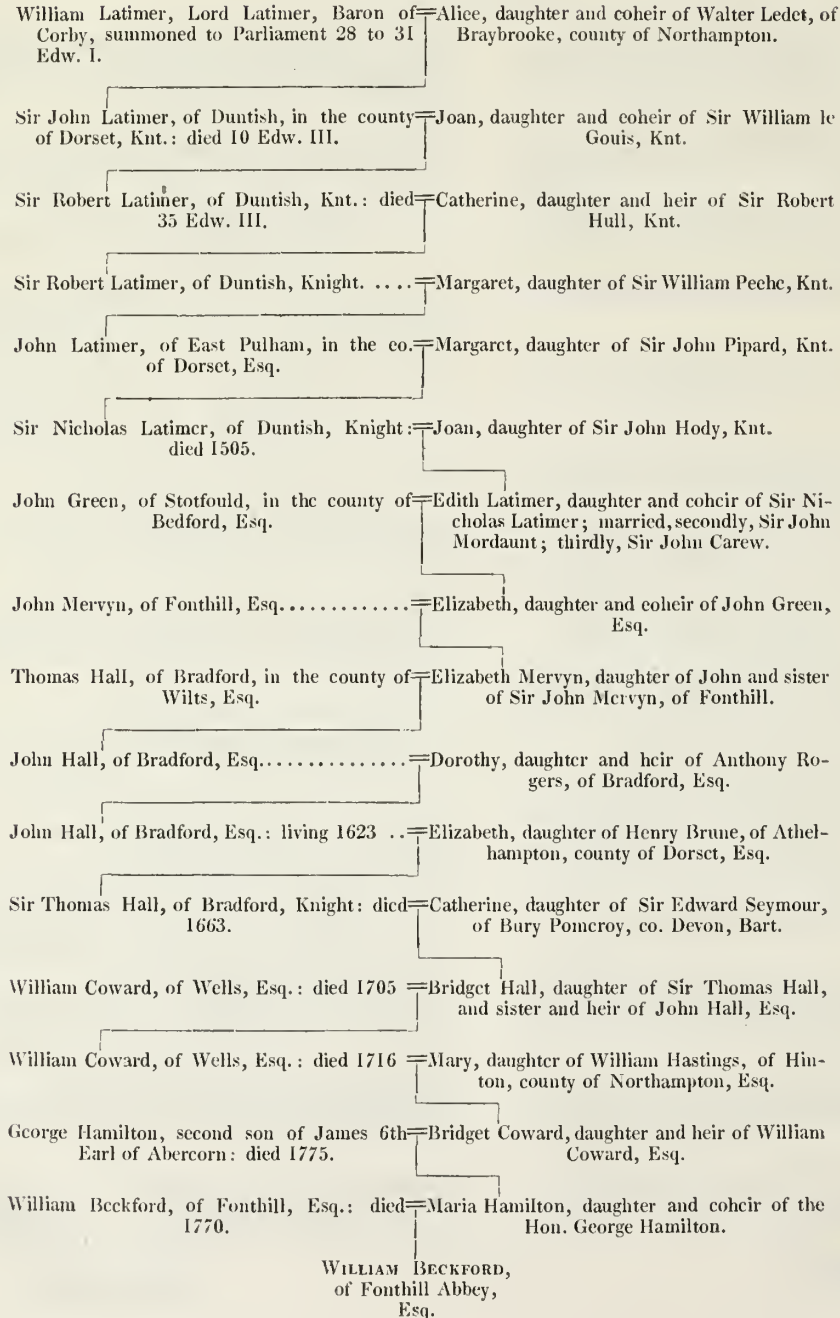


TABLE III.

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